

Wisdom for Leaders

GADM - 530

Midwest Seminary of Bible Theology

ARE YOU BORN AGAIN?

Knowing in your heart that you are born-again, and followed by a statement of faith are the two prerequisites to studying and getting the most out of your MSBT materials. We at MSBT have developed this material to educate each Believer in the principles of God. Our goal is to provide each Believer with an avenue to enrich their personal lives and bring them closer to God.

Is Jesus your Lord and Savior? If you have not accepted Him as such, you must be aware of what Romans 3:23 tells you.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God:

How do you go about it? **You must believe that Jesus is the Son of God.**

I John 5:13 gives an example in which to base your faith.

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

What if you are just not sure? **Romans 10:9-10 gives you the Scriptural mandate for becoming born-again.**

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Take some time to consider this very carefully. Ask Jesus to come into your heart so that you will know the power of His Salvation and make your statement of faith today.

Once you become born-again, it is your responsibility to renew your mind with the Word of God. Romans 12:1-2 tells us that transformation of the mind can only take place in this temporal world by the Word of God.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

The Apostle Paul, giving instructions to his "son" Timothy states in 2 Timothy 2:15:

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be

ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

What happens if we do these things? Ephesians 4:12-13 gives us the answer to this question.

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

By studying the Word of God, you will be equipped for service in the Kingdom of God and you will also be ready to take the position in the Body of Christ to which God has appointed you. You will be able to walk in unity with other Believers and you will be a vessel of honor to God that can rightly divide the word of truth.

If you are not saved and you do not know what to say, consider this simple prayer.

Lord, I know that I have need of a savior. I believe that Jesus died for my sins and the God raised Him from the dead three days later. I ask to be forgiven and for Jesus to come into my heart and be the Lord of my life. I believe now by faith that God has heard my prayer and I am born- again.

If you have prayed this prayer, you must accept by faith that your sins have been forgiven. It is important that you tell someone of your decision to accept the Lord. Also, it is our recommendation that you should attach yourself to a local church and undergo water baptism.

For those who have prayed this prayer with sincerity of heart, we welcome to eternal life in the Kingdom of God. May the blessings of God overtake you.

May God grant you wisdom, knowledge, and understanding in all of His ways.

MSBT Directors and Staff

For Your Consideration

Many times when we read material or study in an area, it seems that the subject matter does not apply to us. This can be because we do not fit the particular age group, gender, or situation that is being talked about. However, there is good reason to learn from any materials that we study; especially the Bible and Bible-based study courses, such as you are embarking on now.

Paul wrote to us in First Corinthians, chapter ten (to) and verse eleven (11), "Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." What Paul is saying here is that God had a purpose in everything He had the writers record for us. Everything that is written down will apply to us in some way or another, whether as a warning, as material for future ministry to someone who needs it, or simply to help us avoid a pitfall that the enemy places in front of us.

The same is true in the Bible courses of Midwest Seminary of Bible Theology. However, there is a possibility that some might think that something does not apply to them, because of the way the materials are written, when we use words that appear to refer to a particular gender. At times the material does apply to gender, as when it is talking about marriage relationships, or possibly the rearing of children. However, there is one area that does not refer to gender, though it may appear so.

In the courses, as well as the Bible, there are areas where the word "he" is used extensively. This is not necessarily designed to refer to gender. God is certainly no respecter of persons, and neither are we. The King James Bible especially, has a myriad of references that use the word "he" which are in no way gender significant. For instance, the Scripture that says, "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: The soul that sinneth, it shall die" Ezekiel 18:4. We all know that women have souls, the same as men. However, the use of the words "father" and "son" here would seem to imply that women are left out. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Also, there is the use of "he" and "she" in terms of natural things. For instance, the Church is continually referred to as "she" in the Scriptures. "She" is pictured as the Bride of Christ. Isaiah 61: 10 speaks of the Bride who has adorned herself with her jewels. Of course, this does not preclude the male gender from being a part of the Church and those who are delivered from the destruction of the end times, the Great Tribulation (Re.21:2).

Ships are referred to as "she," airplanes as "she," yet pastors and elders as "he." Does this mean that women cannot be pastors or elders? No. It simply means that for ease of reference, there has been a gender applied to some words.

No one should feel left out or slighted because of this nuance in the English language. You will find that both genders are not referenced every time in the course materials you are studying, and will study through Midwest Seminary of Bible Theology. It is double referenced in some places, and in some it is not. It is by no means meant to leave out some precious souls, just because we did not double reference every time a gender was referred to.

Wisdom for Leaders

129 pages of Commentary

6 Homework assignments

1 Midterm Exam

1 Final Exam

50 pages of Answer Keys for school sites only (Answer keys are not included in the student's copy of material).

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the Commentary.

Do Homework I, which covers pages 7-25 in the Commentary.

Take Quiz 1, which covers Homework I.

Do Homework II, which covers pages 25-49 in the Commentary

Take Quiz 2, which covers Homework II.

Do Homework III, which covers pages 49-71 in the Commentary

Take Quiz 3, which covers Homework III.

Take Mid Term Exam, which covers Homework I-III.

Do Homework IV, which covers pages 71-97 in the Commentary.

Take Quiz 4, which covers Homework IV.

Do Homework V, which covers pages 97-114 in the Commentary.

Take Quiz 5, which covers Homework V.

Do Homework VI, which covers pages 114-125 in the Commentary.

Take Quiz 6, which covers Homework VI.

Take Final Exam which covers Homework IV-VI.

13 weeks in a Trimester: 11 weeks of teaching and 2 weeks of testing. You will need to cover 11.7 pages per teaching session.

18 weeks in a Semester: 16 weeks of teaching and 2 weeks of testing. You will need to cover 8.1 pages per teaching session.

NOTE: The Instructor is encouraged to add his/her personality to the teaching sessions and to add knowledge to the Commentaries. The Instructor had some latitude if they desire to give some outside homework or essays. Before doing so, please check with the administrator of the school.

ALL TERM PAPERS MUST BE COMPLETED AND TURNED IN TO THE INSTRUCTOR BEFORE THE FINAL EXAM. NO GRADES WILL BE GIVEN FOR THE COURSE WITHOUT THE COMPLETION OF THE TERM PAPER.

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Part I Building a Team

I. TEAMWORK LEADERSHIP

God is looking for us to get our thinking changed to Kingdom thinking. If we will examine the Lord's work closely, we will see that He built a team in order to speed the work of His Kingdom. Jesus poured Himself into those 12 disciples that they might work with Him as He builds the Kingdom. Too often a pastor works himself to the breaking point due to the fact that he does not build a team to help him. There is also the problem of the believers who say that "we pay the pastor to do that". No, we do not! The reason we have a pastor is to have one who will gather, care for, heal the hurts and train us, that we believers might do the work of the ministry (Ep.4:12).

The pastor who does not build a team will find that he cannot grow beyond approximately 100 people. But if he builds a team, he may be able to lead thousands through those that he trains. Someone said that it was not about numbers. Yes it is when it has to do with His Kingdom, but not when it has to do with a man who is trying to build his own! Jesus does not want any to perish (2Pe.3:9).

The man who builds a team of leaders finds that his influence is multiplied and that church/ministry becomes much more influential in the city, the nation, as well as around the world. The man who does not build a team finds that he has no one to send around the world. Nehemiah is an example of a man who built a team. His team was built from those who were discouraged due to affliction and reproach. Even Sanballat, an example of Satan, did not believe that the wall could be rebuilt around Jerusalem by those who were discouraged and reproached (Ne.4:1-2). His statement was, "*Can these burned stones be used to rebuild the wall?*" Of course God can do anything if His people are willing to undertake it. But it took a team.

We can see in Nehemiah's story that every man built his part of the wall (Ne.3:1-31). Another aspect of this story is the fact that though these men labored, they were also prepared for war (Ne.4:16). Though there was an enemy that was threatening them, they did not lose their focus of rebuilding the walls and setting up the gates of the city that their reproach might be taken away. This work to rebuild the wall did not just happen. God put it in Nehemiah's heart to do it, but he needed the king, Artaxerxes, to allow him to go and build. Not only did the king allow him to go, but sent a contingent of soldiers and supplied the materials to complete the gates. Nehemiah finished what God called him to do because he built a team and they worked together.

II. BUILDING A TEAM

There are things that we should look for as a leader, things that are required, before we can accomplish great things with a team. As a leader we should be looking for three things: 1) greater change in people; 2) greater commitment from people; 3) greater

crowds of people.

A. Why People Follow Leaders

People follow us because of our leadership, not because of our preaching or teaching. There are several things that we should know about leadership. For instance, leadership is influence. Leadership is the ability to obtain followers. If we think we are leading, and no one is following, then we are just taking a walk. But if we can obtain followers, the next step will be to turn them into leaders themselves.

Leadership is moving and motivating people who were uninterested to fulfill a cause. That is, there is the cause of the Kingdom, which is at the heart of the Lord's work. Far too often, leaders want to remain in the spotlight, and claim the ministry as "mine". Actually, a leader is a steward of his team.

Everything that we claim as "mine" the enemy can steal. All that we say is God's, the enemy cannot steal. Many people come to church, but are uninterested in building the Kingdom. Others come to church, interested in building the Kingdom, but not knowing how. It is the leader's responsibility to move both groups, as much as possible, into fulfilling the call God gives us to work for the Kingdom.

Leadership is not administration. While there are many administrators, they will not cast vision, and most likely will not train others to take positions of leadership. Further, leadership is not organizational skills. There are many who can organize who cannot cast vision.

For leadership to be truly influential, vision must be cast. When the Lord gives the leader a vision, that leader will gain a passion which will filter down through the local body, and especially to potential leaders. This is vitally important, for humans do not attack and gain the victory if they do not have a passion for something.

B. Leaders Must Grow

A leader's growth and leadership abilities determine the growth of the new, potential leaders. It is truth that our team will unlikely surpass us in leadership growth. In fact, the ministry leader who does not grow himself becomes a "cork in the bottle" which stymies the growth of others. So as a leader, we must continue to grow, just like we expect those who are joining us in leadership to grow.

Leaders must grow in influence, which means that those who are influential will be attracted to them. This comes about because of a spirit of excellence. So how do we grow? We must plan, schedule, and follow through with regular

commitment to leadership growth. That means that we will seek to grow through listening to CDs or watching DVDs on leadership; reading books about leadership; attending conferences, etc. It means that we will buy and read books on leadership, attend conferences and go to meetings on leadership, as well as developing relationships with other leaders.

God designed the universal Body of Christ this way. God designed us to be inter-dependent rather than independent. There is much that we can learn from the goose in this area. It is very seldom we will ever see a single goose flying. Geese fly together for benefit of the entire group. There is a lead goose out front, and those geese that are following then fly in a "V" formation behind the lead goose. They do so for a reason- a 70% lift factor for those who follow the lead goose.

The lead goose takes all of the head-wind, laboring to accomplish the goal. When that lead-goose becomes tired, he will drop out of the lead position, fall in line behind other geese, and take a period of rest. Another goose then moves up and takes the leadership role, facing the headwind.

If we will listen to geese passing overhead, we will hear them honking. They are honking encouragement to the lead goose. How much we can learn from this! How much better it is to honk encouragement to our leaders than to criticize them and tear them down when they do not do it the way we think they should. After all, we do not know what they are facing, and certainly the enemy shoots at them rather than others who are not facing the headwind.

Geese function in teamwork to attain the goal. How much quicker we would reach the goal if the church would do the same thing. After all, "no one can whistle a symphony. It takes an orchestra to play it." (H.E. Luccock)

C. Choosing Friends

The friendships we choose will cause us to be refreshed or they will cause us to be trapped. Those friendships entered into that have strings attached will trap us. Friendships are vital to us, for iron sharpens iron. Therefore, the leader must be around other leaders, that they may be sharpened. Those who are friends in the church should be loyal and involved with church. These are the people we should be spending quality time with.

There is such great danger to face when we are involved with negative people. Those people who say it cannot be done, not only do not do it, but they also slow down those who say it can be done. True friends within the church are those who have demonstrated a willingness to serve without recognition. This means that they do not have to have the spotlight. Those who have to have the spotlight are those who have an ego problem. This has likely come about because they did not receive recognition as a child, were not approved of by their father, and

are now seeking that approval. We cannot lead people if we “need” people. Those who need people are always requiring approval.

The problem with those who require approval is that they can never make hard decisions. Leaders must come to the place where they recognize that they will not please everyone with their decisions, but they must also recognize that the decision has to be made. Far too many leaders need everyone’s approval and everyone’s help. When we meet that leader, we will have found a leader that cannot go very far. After all, we must have God’s approval and not man’s. The ability to make those unpopular decisions is one of the reasons why God chooses a person to be the leader. We must make the decision, no matter whether we will be criticized or not. And perhaps we should say this also, some people will never be satisfied, no matter what decision is made.

D. Developing Leaders

Good leaders develop followers, while great leaders develop leaders. That is a profound statement. Some people try to build a team by getting them shirts that match. Wearing the same color or style shirts does not make a group of people a team. (Buchholz and Roth) So how do we become a great leader? How do we step above the mediocre, or even the good, to the great leader level? It is done a step at a time, by a daily strategy.

(Please note here that we use many analogies and examples from the military, sports, and business, for each of these develop leaders and function by teamwork to “win.” It is the same in the Church, which is the reason we have placed these analogies here.)

1. Daily strategy;

We have to get our spirit ready every day for the task before us. This means that we do not skip a day, get lazy, and go a week until we get back on our plan. Many examples lie before us. Michael Jordan, arguably the greatest basketball player that ever played, worked harder in practice than did his teammates. He showed up for practice early, stayed late, and worked hard while he was there. He was developing himself as a great leader. His development into a great leader also developed Scottie Pippen, a tremendous basketball player in his own right, as well as others. So what kind of daily strategy must we set?

2. Disciplined priorities;

We must discipline our priorities, focusing on the things that will bring about change in us. Change is good. When we change, we grow. As we change, others will see it and be encouraged to grow also.

3. Implement a growth process;

We must implement a leadership growth process for ourselves, as well as implement a leadership growth process for others. That is, we should encourage others who would be leaders to take the same kind of steps we are taking. We do this by example and by our words. Some have gone so far as to require growth by setting up schedules with books and DVDs and CDs that their followers, leaders and potential leaders, might develop as they are.

4. Focus on the process;

Another step in our daily strategy is to focus less on the event and more on the process. What are we saying? Processes carry out what events start. Events are not bad, but if there is no follow-up, due to a real change on the inside, the church or ministry group will begin to depend upon events. This will mean that there is no true growth, as we are always waiting on the next event rather than moving on with what has changed on the inside of us.

E. Thinking Time

1. Time slot for thinking;

Every great leader has established a thinking time slot in their week. A thinking time slot is a period of time in which they will allow no disruptions. No cell phone calls, no visitors, no telephone, no computer- nothing except meditation and thought, allowing the Holy Spirit to direct them. They do so to produce creativity from the Holy Spirit.

2. Producing creativity;

Leaders who have a time slot for thinking and meditation are working to produce creativity and ideas that are truly theirs. Holy Spirit knows everything. God is omniscient, and all the great ideas belong to Him. However, for us to rush here and there, without a time to think and meditate, we will find it impossible for Him to download to us.

3. Records thoughts;

Not only must we establish a thinking timeslot in our week, we also need to record our thoughts on paper. This is very important, for Holy Spirit does not shout at us, or come back and repeat things very often. It is disobedient to hear the Lord's thoughts and not carry them out. He did not give them to us just because He had nothing else to do. He gave them to us that as a leader we might accomplish His purposes.

4. Notepad;

The idea of recording thoughts means that we should have a notepad beside our bed. While this may seem strange, it will become a known fact that often the Lord speaks to us in the night season. If we do not get up and record the thought, we will find that it often escapes us between the time He speaks to us and the next time we remember that He has spoken to us.

5. Share our thoughts;

Along the same line, it is good to share with someone else our thoughts, especially someone who has traveled the road it seems the Lord is directing us on. This is another reason our associations are so important. Not only should we make friends with the people in the church, but also with those who are outside the local church who are believers and have traveled the road we are traveling. As we noted above, iron sharpens iron. To rub shoulders with another leader helps us to become better at being a leader.

F. God Ordained Purpose

God has an ordained purpose for every person, church, and organization. For us to be successful, we must understand that purpose. Purpose is different from vision. Vision is seasonal, while purpose compels people to follow a leader. Purpose is the master of our motivation, giving birth to hope and the passion to act.

Purpose is eternal, while vision is seasonal. Purpose compels people to follow the leader. Purpose is the master of motivation and the mother of commitment. When we see our purpose, there is something on the inside of us that gets us started, while it also gives us the reason for commitment to that purpose.

Purpose gives birth to hope, and it will instill passion in us to act. Every human being wants to know what their purpose is. In fact, one of the great questions of life is "Why am I here?" When we learn the reason why we are here, we become fulfilled and committed people. Purpose is why we exist. God's purpose, the worship of Himself, is why He made us. He wanted a family that He could fellowship with. Jesus is the "...firstborn of many brethren." Jesus, rising from the dead, became the first of those who would fellowship with the Father. From this understanding we can see that purpose is eternal, while vision is temporary. Our purpose is our mission.

G. Vision

It might seem from the previous statements on purpose that vision is not vitally important, yet that is not true. Our vision, the one God shows us, is a focus or blueprint to fulfill the mission. Vision has many responsibilities, for it 1) produces unity; 2) generates excitement; 3) provides direction; 4) brings clarity; 5) involves everyone.

There is room in this world for people with vision, people who are willing to pay the price to make this world a better place to live. These are people who dream God's dream and feel God's desire for humanity. These are people who vow to seek God's best in everything they do for others and for themselves. These are people who turn daydreams into realities and believe that they are God's workmanship. They sing along with the music that stirs inside their hearts, paint the beauty that forms in their minds, build bridges across rivers, trails through the woods, ships to cross the oceans, planes to cross the sky, tunnels through the mountains, and they leave a legacy behind them as a gift to their fellow beings and as a sign of thanksgiving to their Creator.

H. WHY???

Why do we do it that way? Often we should ask that question. Instead of asking a question, usually a statement is made, which are the eight deadly words of the organized church: "That is not the way we do it." This is a picture of those who are stuck in a rut. Ruts are dangerous. Ruts are actually graves with the ends kicked out. We must be ready to minister a positive word in a world of negatives. We must be ready to minister at any time, after the manner the Lord would have us minister.

Leaders, true leaders, will have the mind set of ministering at every season. What about those who are potential leaders? It takes different tools to build a house. We would never think of using a hammer to cut a board into two parts. Actually, it takes those who care. Yes, we know, Jesus is the One building The House, but He uses the different tools that are in the House to build it. Change has to happen in us for us to grow, and change has to happen in us for most of us to care.

God uses those who care. We share here seven goals for the person who cares: 1) commitment to the goal; 2) goals to motivate toward purpose; 3) thinking big; 4) covering the other leader's back; 5) setting small goals to reach bigger goals; 6) preparing to reach the goals; 7) making it a win-win situation.

If we are looking to put our life into other potential leaders, we should always avoid trying to make a leader out of the person who does not care. They will never make a quality leader.

I. Connected

A team, by its very definition, is a connected group that knows it is connected. If they are disconnected, they are no longer a team. How can we know if there is a connection or a disconnection? It is actually quite easy. When people are disconnected, their interaction will be very formal. There will be social niceties, but no heart to heart conversation. Those people will discuss the weather, or the latest ballgame score, but not the thing that is really troubling their heart. They will never discuss together of that which is at the very root of the situation. So what does disconnection look like? Following are three ways to detect it.

1. No exposure of the heart;

Opposite that, the connected person is willing to share their heart. When people are not connected, they will never expose any conflict. The reason they do not expose the conflict is because they are too concerned about being hurt again. There is no trust there. They may talk about it to everyone else, but many times refuse to talk about it with the person that they are having a conflict with. This also means that there will be no “give and take.” They will not grab each other and hug and tease with them. We only do that with people we truly love and are connected to. That is the reason why it is very easy for most families to hug and kiss each other without a problem.

2. Refusal to spend time together;

Along this same avenue of thought, those who are disconnected will not spend time together outside the church building. The reason they will not do this is because they are uncomfortable about random activities with others. When we are connected to others, we have no problem sitting down and eating a meal with them, going fishing, to a ballgame, or some other leisurely activity. When we are disconnected from the group, the nearest thing we will get to comfort is to worship in the same building. This means that those who are disconnected are always looking for the time when the service is over with so they can get away from those they are uncomfortable with.

3. Sacred personal schedules;

Further, those who are disconnected will not reschedule personal situations for the team's benefit. If they have something that is in their personal schedule and it conflicts with the team's schedule, they will choose their personal schedule. The reason is that they are disconnected from the vision of the group. Disconnected people will not relate to any new person that may attend the group. We will not find them going to a new visitor and shaking their hands and introducing themselves. Since

they are disconnected from the large group, they are highly unlikely to get connected to a new person. People who are disconnected will never be a true part of the team, never truly help build the Kingdom, and never receive the benefit of teamwork.

III. IMPACT OF TEAMWORK

John Maxwell says, “One is too small a number to achieve greatness.” That is a profound statement. Many of us admire those who have been successful in all kinds of fields of endeavor. We love pioneers and bold individualists, those who succeed despite odds and opposition.

However, nothing that really matters has been achieved by an individual that acts alone. Some seem to be solo efforts, but the truth is, great achievement is always a team effort. Albert Einstein, the man who developed the theory of relativity said,

“Many times a day, I realize how much my own outer and inner life is built upon the labors of my fellow men, both living and dead, and how earnestly I must exert myself in order to give in return as much as I have received.”

In physics, Einstein’s theory is that space and time are relative concepts rather than absolute concepts. The part of his work that we are most acquainted with is the physics formula, $E = mc^2$, which is to say, energy and mass are equivalent and transmutable. Unless we are a scientist, these statements are likely far over our head. But the point is, Einstein had such great mental ability and yet recognized that others going before him had helped him reach the place he had reached.

Team work has been vitally important in America’s history, whether we are talking about the wagon trains that conquered the West, the thousands of laborers who laid railroad tracks to travel to the western parts of America in a faster fashion, the assembly of the huge airplanes that transport men and cargo around the world, or space shuttles that put men and materials into space.

No man can claim to have done any of these things. This tends to prove the Chinese proverb, “Behind an able man there are always other able men.” C Gene Wilkes, writing in the book Jesus On Leadership, says this of teamwork:

“In the deep history of teamwork: 1) teams afford more resources, ideas, and energy than can an individual; 2) teams maximize the leader’s potential and minimizes his weaknesses; 3) teams provide multiple perspectives on meeting any need or reaching a goal, thus providing several alternatives for each situation; 4) teams share credit for victories and blame for defeats, exposing humility and authentic community; 5) teams hold leaders accountable for the gold; 6) teams simply achieve more than the individual.”

A. Working Alone

When we understand the potential of teamwork, we scratch our heads as to why people try to do things by themselves. There are several reasons, including:

1. Temperament;

Those who are not outgoing tend to not think in terms of teams, as they do not think about enlisting others to help achieve the goal. While some, facing a challenge, seek to find someone to team up with them, others do not work that way.

The person who is not naturally inclined to seek to be part of a team tends to create barriers to their own potential. Much more can be achieved as a result of working with others rather than against them. Teams are required if anything that has lasting value is to be achieved. Even the introverted person can enjoy the benefits of participating with a team. We need each other. Humans require support in this thing called life. In life, we need the give-and-take, the confessing and forgiving, and the reaching out to embrace and rely upon others. There is no human that is a self-sufficient, independent, whole person. We really should stop trying to act like we are.

2. Insecurity;

Some people are insecure and do not promote teamwork as they feel threatened by others. Yet to have others around us “shows the intelligence of a leader”, according to Niccolo Machiavelli. Insecurity is likely to cause a leader to surround themselves with weak people.

According to John Maxwell, in his book, The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership, he says that only secure leaders give power to others. This comes from the fact that insecure leaders fail to build strong teams because they: a) want to maintain control over people; b) fear being replaced by someone.

Either way, leaders actually undermine their own potential and keep their people from their best efforts when they surround themselves with weak people. This is to deny the truth of what President Woodrow Wilson said, “We should not only use all the brains we have, but all that we can borrow.”

3. Ego;

Some people like to believe that they can do everything, though these “supermen” or “superwomen” do not really exist. Trying to do everything

ourselves soon puts us in a position of failure, opening our eyes to the truth. When we come to realize that other people can help us do a better job than we could do alone, it means we are developing.

If we are going to do something big, we will have to let go of our ego and encourage others to join with us in the project.

4. Naïveté;

To be naïve is to underestimate the size of the task before us. Trying to go it alone, these people fail to become team builders, and then fail in the vision or goal. There is potential to escape from this situation, as a person discovers that their dream is bigger than their capabilities. Recognizing that they cannot accomplish the goal alone, they likely begin to build a team to achieve their goal. For some, the realization comes too late, so they give up and never accomplish the goal.

B. The Impact of Teamwork

Perhaps teamwork is nowhere seen to be as beneficial as in the military. At the lowest level, a squad of men, probably led by a young lieutenant, will work together to root out the enemy. They cover each other for protection. Every man in the squad has his eyes out for the enemy. When the enemy is found, covering fire will be given in order for other members of the squad to get in better positions to kill the enemy. If a member of the squad is wounded, other members will come to his aid, covering him and rescuing him from the enemy fire. Each man in the squad is assigned to do a particular job and if a good team member, will carry it out. One may be a sniper with a long-range rifle and scope, while another carries a mortar launcher. Yet another has the ammunition for the mortar launcher, and others carry and use automatic weapons.

Each man in the squad depends upon others in order to accomplish the goal- the elimination of the enemy without loss of life. This can be seen in every aspect of the military. Each man is trained to perfection that he might add his part to the overall achievement of the goal. No one goes it alone. At every level of the military we can see this precision training and preparation for achieving the goal. From the tank team, which train to use long-range guns as well as short range, to the aircraft carrier that has a precision team for launch and retrieval of aircraft as well as those who prepare the planes, to those who fire the missiles; in each we can see great preparation and teamwork in the precision processes of achieving the goal.

The same is true in all kinds of teams. In a choir, each voice level must stay not only at their level, but also sing their part. In the sports team, each member has a part to play and the team is likely a loser if members do not carry out their part in an excellent manner. So it is at work, business, ministry, and just about every

other kind of activity we might be involved in. In each of these areas, teamwork is what causes more to be done than we could possibly do by ourselves. There is a compounding effect that takes place, including talent.

John Maxwell says that there are essentially five impacts of good teamwork:

1) teamwork divides the effort and multiplies the effect; 2) talent wins games, but teamwork wins championships; 3) teamwork is not about you; 4) great teams create community; 5) adding value to others adds value to you. (John Maxwell, Teamwork 101) Let us explore these impacts.

1. Dividing the effort - multiplying the effect;

Teamwork provides better results from less work. People working together can always do more than the person who works alone. This is true beyond the simple mathematical standpoint. This effect is called synergy. Synergy is the interaction of two or more agents or forces so that their combined effect is greater than the sum of their individual effects.

While this technical understanding of synergism is important, the impact is greater than our understanding. Synergism can be difficult in the beginning, for teams seldom come together or develop on their own. To develop a team, there must be leadership and cooperation. This means that there is usually more work on the front end, while putting the team together, than there is at the back end where we actually reach the goal. However, the front end work is worth it.

2. Winning championships;

The New England Patriots football team, winner of three Super Bowl championships in a four-year period, has a sign in their locker room that says,

“Individuals play the game, but teams win championships.”

How appropriate the understanding that no one individual can win a championship. While there were many excellent football players on the team, not one of them could get the whole job done. That team and others like them are models of teamwork. Other examples abound, such as the Boston Celtics who in years past dominated the National Basketball Association and have won more championships than any other team in NBA history (eight consecutive championships). Perhaps even more amazing than their eight consecutive championships is the fact that they never had a single player who led the league in scoring. The coach of the team said, “One person seeking glory doesn’t accomplish much; everything we’ve done has been the result of people working together to meet our common goals.”

Business has its teamwork also. Harold S. Geneen, leader of ITT (International Telephone and Telegraph) for 20 years said, "The essence of leadership is the ability to inspire others to work together as a team- to stretch for a common objective." If it works in business, and it works in sports, and it works in the military then why do we not use it in ministry?

3. It is not about me;

A team is a "small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a purpose, performance goals and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable," according to the Harvard Business School. This can be a challenge which requires good leadership, for:

- a. sometimes people do not want to work together as team members;
- b. often the more talented an individual is the better qualified the leadership must be in order to get them to work with others as a team.

We could say that getting people to work hard together is the true measure of leaders. Following are some quotes from men who have been involved in team leadership:

"The freedom to do your own thing ends when you have obligations and responsibilities. If you want to fail yourself - you can - but you cannot do your own thing if you have responsibilities to team members." (Lou Holtz- College football coach at 6 universities with a record of 249 wins, 132 losses, and 7 ties.)

"In order to have a winner, the team must have a feeling of unity. Every player must put the team first ahead of personal glory." (Paul Bryant - at retirement had the most wins in collegiate football- 323.)

"If the team is to reach its potential, each player must be willing to subordinate his personal goals to the good of the team." (Bud Wilkinson- whose Oklahoma football team once won 47 straight games and finished with 145 wins, 29 losses and 4 ties.)

"There are plenty of teams in every sport that have great players and never win titles. Most of the time, those players aren't willing to sacrifice for the greater good of the team. The funny thing is, in the end, their unwillingness to sacrifice only makes individual goals more difficult to achieve. One thing I believe to the fullest is that if

you think and achieve as a team, the individual accolades will take care of themselves. Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships.” (Michael Jordan- leader of a Collegiate championship team and professional basketball player whose team won 6 world titles in the NBA.)

“Team work requires that everyone’s efforts flow in a single direction. Feelings of significance happen when the team’s energy takes on a life of its own.” (Pat Riley- head coach of 5 world title NBA teams and 3 times NBA coach of the year.)

From these comments and others, we can see that great teams have players who made decisions based on what was best for the team and not based only on what they thought was good for them as individuals. There is no organization or group for which this is not true. While many highly talented people have strong egos, that individual ego must be converted into sacrifice and synergy for the team.

True team leaders are those who believe that: a) they do not have all the answers and therefore do not try to provide them; b) they do not have to make all the key decisions, so they do not.

Truly great team leaders understand they cannot succeed without the combined contribution of every member of the team for the common goal. This causes them to avoid words or actions that would hinder another team member’s input or anything that might intimidate another team member.

4. Creating community;

No team can be effective or reach their goal without creating an environment that relationships can grow in. This means that teammates must become connected to one another for success. This has been called community, which is an environment based on trust. Without trust, little can be accomplished. When we examine winning teams, we find that the players extend trust to each other. While there is a risk that their trust might be violated, and they could be hurt, true team players actually give trust freely and conduct themselves in a way that will earn the trust of others.

Those who give freely of trust will develop bonds of trust which will be tested over time. As trust is tested and proven to be trustworthy, players begin to believe and have faith in each other. They learn that the other person will be consistent in keeping their commitments, maintaining their confidences and support. As the sense of community grows, so grows the potential to work together.

Those who extend trust to others will find that there still may be conflict. Because we are individuals, disagreements can and likely will be experienced. All relationships have tension, but with good leadership, those situations will be worked out. Some think that unity is a place where there are no disagreements. That is not true. If that is the idea people have, many will hide their concerns to protect that false notion of unity. We do not have to avoid the conflict, but rather acknowledge and face the disagreement and deal with it.

The true spirit of community has a reconciling spirit. That is, we face the conflict, find the places of agreement, and continue to be on the same team, which reaches for the goal. Even if we disagree, we should do so agreeably. Not everyone will agree with a particular position, but no one should leave the team just because of the conflicting position.

5. Adding value;

As we add value to others, they add value to us. Sometimes people “join” a team for their personal benefit. Some are looking for a title and position, but not the responsibility. Others desire to be a star and want a supporting cast. This attitude will hurt and hinder a team. When a very talented person, or even a mildly talented person has a mind to serve, great things will happen.

Those who take advantage of others will fail in business and in relationships. Those who add value to others will succeed. These are the same thoughts Jesus had. He said, *“No greater love has a man than that he lay down his life for his friends.”* The 28th President of the United States of America, Woodrow Wilson, understood this. He said,

“You are not here merely to make a living. You are here in order to enable the world to live more amply, with a greater vision, with a finer spirit of hope and achievement. You are here to enrich the world, and to impoverish yourself if you forget the errand.”

C. Accomplishing the Dream

To accomplish the dream we must put together a team to help us. God sets great tasks before us. The greatest task that we could ever have is the preaching of the Gospel to the whole world. The Apostle Paul said, *“How shall they hear except a preacher is sent?”* (Ro.10:15) Following are some questions that we need to answer that we might put together the proper team.

1. What is my dream?

The answer to this question reveals much. If we do not have a dream, we will never cause much to happen. The really great things that happen start with a really great dream. God places things in our hearts for His purpose.

God shows us our possibilities, by what He puts in our hearts.

“Hold fast to dreams for if dreams die,
Life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly.
Hold fast to dreams for when dreams go,
Life is a barren field frozen with snow.”
(Langston Hughes)

2. Who are my team members?

A person's current situation is measured by this question. Our potential for accomplishing the dream is only as good as the current team. This gives us reason to examine who is joining us on the journey. Half-hearted companions will never help us accomplish the dream. Great dreams with bad teams will only produce nightmares.

3. What is the quality of my team?

To accomplish the dream that team must be of the same size/quality. Otherwise we will not achieve it. If we have a gigantic dream, and a mediocre team, the dream will never be accomplished. A great team with a weak dream is better than a great dream with a weak team.

D. Focus on the Team

Many times those who have a dream focus more on the dream than they do on the team. This is shortsighted, for if we build the right team, the dream will be accomplished. As each dream brings challenges of its own kind, so we must understand the type of challenge the dream brings that we may build the right kind of team. Thus we must see and move on the principles that:

1. If the challenge is something new, we must have a creative team;
2. If the challenge creates controversy, we must have a united team;
3. If the challenge is bringing change, we must have a flexible team;
4. If the challenge will bring things that are not pleasant, we must have a motivated team;

5. If there is diversity in the challenge, there must be a complementary team;
6. If the challenge is long-term, there must be a determined team.

If we really want to achieve the dream, we must grow the team. Our motives must be correct here, for some people grow a team just to benefit self. Others simply enjoy a team experience and want to create a sense of community, without the goal of fully completing the dream. Others simply want to build an organization. These reasons are not bad, for if we are motivated by all of them as a group, those desires to build the team likely will add value to everyone on the team. If the desire is to build a team from only one of these reasons, we should reexamine our motives.

E. Team Growth

Many times the dream we have finds us in the position of not having a matching team. At this point, we can either grow that team or give up the dream. When we believe that God gives us the dream there are several things we must do to grow the team:

1. Develop members;

Individual team members must grow to their potential. As leader of a team, our most important responsibility is to see potential that is in people, even though they may not see it themselves.

Great leaders develop other leaders, so we must draw those leadership qualities out of the team members. The job of a leader is accomplished in this process. We must look at the people of our team, think upon them and determine what they need. For instance:

- a. the person who is a self-reliant achiever will need responsibility;
- b. The disillusioned learner will need coaching;
- c. The cautious completer will need support;
- d. The enthusiastic beginner will need direction.

These attributes are in many people who will be our team members. This means we have to give them a chance to grow by putting them in the position they need to be in.

2. Add members;

As we place people in the position they need to be in, we may find that there are those that we still lack, due to the talent content of the ones who are on our team already. Recruiting talent is a vital aspect of accomplishing together as a team. While this may be one key person, at other times it may require two, three or four people. Obviously, the key person with talent in a specific area can make the difference between success and failure in accomplishing the dream.

3. Change leadership;

Different types of challenges require different kinds of leadership. When a team has the right talent but is not growing, the possibility is that someone else should be stepping into the leadership role. This could be for a short season or for a more permanent timeframe.

The challenge that is faced at the moment likely determines who the leader needs to be. This is due to the fact that each team member has strengths and weaknesses. Some can cast vision and model unselfish service. Others can organize and motivate, while others can do the hard labor and yet others can do the finishing process. If we build the right kind of team, when a particular challenge shows up, there will also be a leader to meet it. If we are facing a challenge and do not seem to be making progress, we may need to change the leader.

4. Ineffective members;

Team members who are ineffective can cause a winning team to lose. This may be due to poor attitudes or lack of skills. The team must always come first, which means we may have to remove a team member. That does not make them a bad person, but just that they are on the wrong team. When there are flare-ups and tensions between team members, we should look at why that is happening.

Leaders should not have to negotiate peace between two team members. Often there will be a member who is stirring up dissension who is at the root of the problem. To remove that person is to restore peace. If the team continually falls short, breaking down in morale, it is likely there is a need to change a team member. It is important for us to remember that growing a team is demanding and requires much time-consuming effort. To achieve great dreams is to have no other choice. When the challenge escalates, the need for teamwork escalates. The effort will be worth the goal.

IV. ENDURING TEAMS

There are times when the leaders in the middle sections of an organization or group are highly frustrated. This can happen, even though they have a great desire to lead and succeed, because the leaders above them are often a greater hindrance than a help to them.

In examining the reasons people leave their jobs, nearly 70% do so because of ineffective or incompetent leadership in an organization. These people are leaving because of poor leadership, not because of a poor organization, vision, dream or ministry. Leaders have the power that no one else has to create a positive leadership culture.

A positive leadership culture will cause potential leaders to flourish. By creating that environment, people with leadership potential can gain experience, learn, and advance into what God has for them. To do so will bring about the kind of leaders that make an organization or ministry great. As a leader works at making their organization a place for leaders to lead and do it well, they must have a certain focus. That means that the leader not only leads the people in the organization, but finds leaders to lead the organization. This means that they lead the people, develop leaders, and empower the other leaders while they lead the organization. Those with great potential will serve as subordinate leaders as the top leader leads the organization. This likely does not take place over a short period of time. The question is, where will the organization or ministry be in five years if the leader does not rise up leaders in an environment that unleashes them to their calling?

Those that would revolutionize their organization or ministry can do so by adopting a process. Only the leader can do this. It requires a commitment, a daily commitment to certain power-unleashing activities. The following are from John Maxwell, who says that these activities include: 1) high value of people; 2) committing resources; 3) highly valued leadership; 4) finding potential leaders; 5) respecting people; 6) providing leadership experiences; 7) rewarding initiative; 8) having a safe environment; 9) enjoying personal growth; 10) having an inner circle; 11) commitment; 12) loosing the team members.

A. High Value of People

The leader who will develop a leader-friendly environment must have a change on the inside. That is, if we do not value people, we will never create a culture that will develop leaders. We never commit ourselves to those things that we do not value. That is the reason one understanding of worship is that to which we give our time, attention and money. We value God, so we commit ourselves to Him with our offerings, our time in worship and fellowship, and the study of His Word. Just so, we must place a high value on people if we are to develop them into leaders.

Leadership and business focuses basically on two things: 1) the vision of the business; 2) the bottom line. Vision is what excites us, while the bottom line keeps us in business. In ministry, it is the same, though we are not necessarily looking for the same kind of “profit”. Between the vision and profitability, there are people who work in the business or organization. If we ignore the people, paying attention only to profitability and vision, we will lose the people, and most likely the vision and the bottom line. Only as we focus on people, do we have the potential to “win” in all three areas. The most valuable asset in any organization or church is the people.

The greatest leaders are those who do not take credit for the organization or ministry’s accomplishments. Those who will give credit to their people, placing a high value upon them, will find they attract future leaders. We can often hear companies and ministry say that they value their people, but talk is cheap. We can find this out, especially when we talk to people who know the organization or ministry, but do not work for it. Their answers give the most accurate picture. This is how we can get a true picture of whether the leader of that organization or ministry places a high value on people. We believe that a question God would ask us is, “Do you place a high value on people?” Obviously God already knows the answer. Do we?

B. Commit Resources

If we are going to develop people, we will have to commit resources to the effort. Resources are not just money, but everything that we can utilize to develop people. While many leaders spend time speaking into the lives of their potential leaders, and those that are at a lower level of leadership, what else can be used? Resources would include what we write, CDs or DVDs on particular subjects, Bible college courses, or anything else that will help people to receive understanding.

Books are especially valuable since they can be taken along with us and read by portions. Today, many books are in electronic form and are accessed by small iPads or other similar devices. Books are especially valuable when you compare them to seminars. While seminars and conferences create energy and enthusiasm, they do not develop people as well as printed materials because they are process oriented. That is, they can be referred back to at a person’s own pace or leisure. It takes a lot of effort and some expenditure to develop leaders. We must not be shortsighted here, for there will be a cost.

It is important for the leader to understand that no matter what it costs in resources, that cost will never be as high as the cost of not developing people. The question here then is, “Are we committed to providing resources for leadership development, no matter what it costs?”

C. Highly Valued Leadership

Leading an organization or ministry means that leadership is always an issue. Anytime more than one is working together, leadership comes into play. In some ministries, emphasis is placed so much on the effort that leadership is not even thought about. Good leaders recognize the importance of leadership. In his book, American Soldier, General Tommy Franks says:

“The months in the desert had reinforced my long-standing conviction that sergeants really were the backbone of the Army. The average trooper depends on the Non Commissioned Officer (NCO) for leadership by personal example. I thought of Sam Long and Stag, of Staff Sergeant Kittle- they had been examples of what a sergeant should be. If a noncommissioned officer is dedicated to his troops, the squad or section will have hard, realistic training, hot food when it's available, and the chance to take an occasional shower. If a sergeant is indifferent to the needs of his soldiers, their performance will suffer, and their lives might be wasted. A smart officer works hard to develop good NCOs.”

Most of the American military understands the value of leadership. A high value is placed on it and developing that leadership ability in others adds value to the military. The question here would be, “Do we place a high value on leadership in our organization?”

D. Find Potential Leaders

If we desire to develop leadership abilities in others we will be on the lookout for those potential leaders at all times. We should understand that potential leaders do not just suddenly pop up before us. We must spend time searching for them. We might call these potential leaders, “Eagles”. Eagles do not flock together, but those who would be Eagles are attracted by other Eagles and what can be demonstrated to them by that Eagle.

Eagles have certain characteristics:

1. They make things happen;
2. They see opportunities;
3. They influence the opinions and actions of others;
4. They add value to others;
5. They draw winners to them;
6. They equip other eagles to lead;

7. They provide ideas that help the organization;
8. They possess an uncommonly great attitude;
9. They live up to their commitments;
10. They show fierce loyalty to the organization and the leader.
(John Maxwell, Teamwork 101)

Are we looking for those who possess these qualities, our future potential leaders?

E. Respect People

In finding and developing leaders, we must get to know them better as individuals. As we do, so, we will find that there are characteristics common to all leaders that we should be looking for. If the person is a potential leader, taking them through the development process will expose these characteristics, such as:

1. they want to see results;
2. they want to be effective;
3. they want to be in the picture;
4. they want to be appreciated;
5. they want to be a part of the celebration.

Those who would develop leaders must strike a balance between these universal desires and the individual needs of the people. This requires the leader to tailor the development process according to the individual. Different potential leaders will have different requirements. To tailor the development process means that we respect them enough to specifically target their development. The question we should ask here is, "Do we know and respect our people?"

F. Provide Leadership Experiences

In the end result, it is impossible to learn leadership without actually leading. Leadership is action, so there must be activity in that area. This means that the leader must delegate responsibilities so that the potential leader will not miss developmental opportunities that they can handle.

Too often leadership gives tasks to perform rather than leadership functions to

fulfill for the up and coming leader. If we do not delegate leadership by giving some authority and requiring accountability, those potential leaders will never gain the experience that will help them to lead well. Obviously, the question here is, “Are we providing our people with leadership experiences?”

G. Reward Initiative

No potential leader will ever be a leader without taking initiative. In order to be an effective leader, we must be proactive, making things happen.

Most ministry leaders are initiators, but that does not mean that they feel comfortable when others use initiative. This is because they trust their own instincts, but do not know for sure they can trust the instincts of their people. Additionally, emerging leaders often want to take the lead before they are actually ready for it. Yet, potential leaders cannot become full-fledged leaders unless they can develop and use the initiative God has put within them. The solution is to know the timing.

1. If they are allowed to use their initiative too soon the growth process will be short-circuited or even aborted;
- b. If they are held back when they are ready to move, their growth is short-circuited.

This timing issue can be solved by recognizing whether our mindset is one of scarcity or abundance. This is an amazing truth, but if we see the world as having a limited amount of resources and a finite number of opportunities, we will be reluctant to allow our potential leaders to take a risk. The reason is that we think the ministry or organization might not be able to recover if they make a mistake. If our mindset is that opportunities are unlimited and resources are available and renewable, we are much more likely to take a risk. When we want what God wants for the same reasons God wants it, we are unlimited and unstoppable. That means we would not doubt their ability to recover should they make a mistake. The question here is, “Do we reward leadership initiative?”

H. Safe Environment

It is a safe environment for growth when people are able to ask questions, share ideas, and take risks. Historian Garry Wills said, “Leaders have a say in what they are being led to. A leader who neglects that soon finds himself without followers.”

We can recognize a secure leader at the top when we see them allowing the leaders who work for him to be full participants in the leadership process. This places the leader at the top in a tough position. Do they allow the leaders at middle levels to question them? Do they allow leaders at the middle level to

share ideas? Do they allow leaders at the middle level to take a risk? If so, we can say that the leader at the top does not take things personally, does not feel threatened, and is willing to allow his subordinates to succeed or fail. These are signs of a mature, top quality leader.

Leadership is challenging by its nature. Those things that are challenged include: 1) outdated ideas; 2) old ways of doing things; 3) the status quo. Top leadership must be sure to remember that whatever they reward will get done.

If we can be secure and let our subordinates find new ways of doing things, even in ways that are better than our idea, our organization or ministry will move forward more quickly. This means that we have to recognize that we do not have all the answers and cannot fix every problem. It means the leader at the top goes into the background and allows the subordinate leaders to progress and accomplish. It means the leader at the top becomes a counselor and encourager, not a micromanager. Micromanaging will always tend to stifle innovation. So our question here is, "Are we providing an environment where people can ask questions, share ideas, and take risks?"

I. Personal Growth

No top leader can afford to not continue to personally grow as his subordinates do. The problem is that many top leaders have wrong attitudes toward growth. These could include the fact that they feel they have already grown as much as possible or that they only want their people to grow and are dedicated to that process. Wrong attitudes will stop an organization from growing.

When subordinate leaders see the top leader growing, a new culture develops in the organization or ministry. This removes barriers between the leader and the rest of the people, placing them all on the same level, and making the top leader human and accessible. It also says that growth is a priority, not a byproduct. The question is here, "Are we growing with our people?"

J. Inner Circle

Every organization or ministry has what would appear to be an inner circle. Those who have high potential should be drawn into that inner circle. Jesus demonstrated this. He had the 70, the 12, and then He had Peter, James and John. Peter, James and John evidently had the highest potential. We can see this from a historical standpoint, and from what they as individuals accomplished. One was the pastor of the first Church in Jerusalem. One was the apostle to the Jews. One was the revelator and the historian that documented the moving of the Spirit of God in the early stages of the Church. All three were leaders who had great impact on the future of the Church.

Those who follow the aggressive leader will begin to rise in performance

according to the capability of their leader. Too many times leaders have become leaders without the proper preparation and attitudes. Some were given a position, some rose because of the crisis in the organization, and some were mentored. The vast majority of successful potential leaders are leaders because someone mentored them into leadership. People do not just accidentally go through the process; they must be led. If we would see a high caliber leader developed, we must be a high caliber leader ourselves. If we have been called to lead a ministry group, it is probably because we are the best leader in the organization at that time. Too, it is likely that the Lord sees things in us that we do not see ourselves.

To follow Jesus model, we should hand-pick people with the greatest potential and invite them into our inner circle and mentor them. The number that is being mentored is not as important as whether we work with them on a regular basis, giving them our very best. Referring to a previous statement, if we value people, we will give them our very best. So our question here is, "Are we drawing people with potential into our inner circle?"

K. Commitment

Are we committed to developing a leadership team? Many leaders of a ministry try to do everything themselves. Thankfully, most of them wake up one day, or are prompted by the Lord, that reaching the dream will never happen if they do not help develop other leaders. Some thoughts here:

1. No one does everything well;
2. No one has enough time to do it all;
3. No one has it all together except Jesus.

If we want our ministry organization to reach its potential, going from average to good or good to great, we must develop a team of leaders. The team of leaders we develop will fill in each other's gaps, challenge each other, and sharpen each other. Remember, iron sharpens iron. There is a ceiling to our own leadership limitations, and if we are trying to do at all, we will never break through that ceiling. The question here is, "Are we committed to developing our leadership team?"

L. Loose Them

Many leaders, especially pastors, can feel uncertainty and insecurity about the leadership development process related to the releasing of young leaders to lead. Parents who have a child about to leave home for college or to strike out on their own feel this. While every "eaglet" must be kicked out of the nest to learn to fly, it can be a time of trepidation for parents. Eaglets become very

comfortable in the nest with mama or daddy bringing food to them every day. There always comes a time when the mother eagle will pull the soft down from the nest, so that the sharp sticks will prod the eaglet, prompting it to be willing to strike out from the nest.

If the eaglet will not leave on its own to be trained to fly, the mama eagle will actually take it high in the sky, and drop it. While this may seem heartless, it would be more heartless to not teach that eaglet to fly. The little eaglet, hurtling toward the earth, screams and flops until he can gain understanding that his wings certainly will carry him up into the sky. If the eaglet is coming too close to the ground and has not mastered flight, the mama eagle will swoop under him and catch him on her back, lifting him up into the sky, and will then dump him again. This process does not have to happen many times before the eaglet can fly on its own.

What does this have to do with us? With preparation, training, and opportunity, most of our young potential leaders can fly the first time. Certainly, there will be some who will fail, even perhaps a second or third time. The question then becomes, are they really potential leaders or not? The top leader's responsibility is to function as a trainer and one who will release leaders to their potential. That means we must remove the barriers for people that they may rise to their potential. Those who are leaders in the middle of an organization, as they have barriers removed from before them, will also remove barriers for those below them. This will never happen if the top leader does not dedicate themselves to developing and releasing leaders. But as they do, the ministry organization will change for the better and everyone involved will become fully satisfied working for and with that group.

V. EFFECTIVE TEAMWORK

Effective teamwork does not just happen; it must be worked at. An effective team will have certain qualities and characteristics, which, if cultivated, will produce a cohesive team that can perform any required task. These characteristics include several attributes.

A. Cohesive Unit

The team that is a cohesive unit is a team that has members who care for one another. This caring for one another can be seen in many military units, and especially seen in the United States Marines. The Marines have been known to be wounded in combat and recovering in a hospital, when their unit is sent out on a dangerous mission. Instead of waiting to recover, the Marines left the hospital and went with them, realizing their survival depended upon one another.

Cohesive units can be built by gathering the team members together outside of the work relationship. This can be done by retreats and other social settings, in

which members spend time with others that they do not know very well. This helps to avoid cliques in the organization and builds relationships.

B. What Is Important?

The team that functions as a single unit has a common goal and purpose. Common goals and purposes cannot be developed unless each team member knows what is important.

Sports teams recognize that they must be more effective at scoring than their opponents. Team members who understand this spend time improving and perfecting their ability to score. But there is also another aspect, for defense is a part of winning in sports too. So, both knowing how to score and how to defend against the other team scoring, are important.

Organizations that simply supply a list of duties without a vision will have team members that do not know how to “score”. They may have the skills to help score, but never know that those skills must be used together in order to increase the success of the team. The team member that does not know what is important, such as defending against the other team scoring, hobbles themselves with ineffectiveness, as well as preventing the team from achieving success. This may sound simple, but many team members in business do not know the full vision of the business. We can never communicate the vision and purpose too much!

C. Communication

Effective teams have a leader that communicates what is important to the team. Also, the individual team members communicate with each other. This makes sure that the important tasks are not left undone, as well as negates team members duplicating effort.

Team members who communicate well let others know what is going on so that the team’s best interest is protected. Clear, formal lines of communication must be established for good team work.

Further, there must be positive communication established and encouraged on a daily basis beyond the official organ of communication by the organization. This includes those times around the water fountain, coffeepot, and copying machine. Team members must feel that they are in a safe environment to offer suggestions or criticisms. If they feel threatened, they will not freely trade information in a spirit of cooperation. When they know they can discuss ideas without being criticized, they will communicate openly and increase the team’s productivity and value.

D. Growing Together

Team members who care for each other, have a common goal, and communicate with each other are ready to start growing. The team leader is responsible to orchestrate a team's growth, both personally and professionally. Team members, learning together on a regular basis, will help to implement this. Communication from the leader brings about the team members knowing what is going on, regardless of position or responsibilities.

Not only should the entire team learn together so that they may grow together, but small teams of learners who work together on a project helps them to learn also. This builds strong relational bonds and should be done between various team members. This allows the team leader to know which team members work together well for future productivity purposes. Another avenue that can be used is to send various people to seminars, and then request that they teach other team members what they have learned. By taking turns teaching and learning from each other, team growth is promoted.

E. Fitting Together

Many things affect a team's fitting together. This has more to do with working together than it does with talent. We can see this on professional basketball teams, where two or three superstars on the same team do not perform as well as five well skilled teammates who work together. This means that fitting together requires an attitude of partnership.

When teammates respect each other an attitude of partnership can be seen. With this attitude, each teammate desires to contribute to the team's welfare and they expect a strong contribution from each teammate. Trust is what makes it possible for teammates to rely on each other. It also brings them to a place of making up for each other's weaknesses instead of putting the other team member down because of those weaknesses. It means they will allow the team member who is best at a particular task do it without shame on their part. It means the team members work as a single unit, accomplishing together what they recognize as important. This also will cause a team personality to come forth as they know and trust each other. Team members have to play a role, based on their own strengths and weaknesses, to truly fit into the team.

F. Team Interests

Any team member that does not place the team's interests above their own will soon not be a team member. As team members develop genuine trust in each other, it is possible to place their own rights and privileges beneath the best interests of the team.

Selfishness is put down based on what is best for the team. Not all team

members will place their own personal rights beneath the best interests of the team. We see this often in professional sports, where team members get traded because they did not “fit in” with the rest of the team. They refuse to be unselfish and continue to promote their own interests, failing to become a true team member.

Those who genuinely value the team’s success as more than the value of their own individual interests will likely become great team members. When they care for each other, following a leader who has effectively cast vision, they will recognize that their success will be greater when the team succeeds. As a team member places their own individual rights beneath the interests of the team, that personal sacrifice must be encouraged and rewarded, lest even a good team member begin to look for another team to play on. If the leader and other members of the team recognize and reward that self-sacrifice, team members will increasingly identify themselves with the team. As John Maxwell says, “...individualism wins trophies, but teamwork wins pennants.”

G. Special Roles

As team members are willing to put the team first, they will begin to recognize their different roles on that team. They will begin to recognize what has to be done to win and they will recognize and know their teammates capabilities. That knowledge, along with encouragement from the team leader, causes people to assume appropriate roles. That is the reason that a player who comes off the bench after several minutes into the basketball game may be the most valuable player on the team. He is a role player, fitting in where he needs to fit, that the team may win.

Those who occupy a special place on a team feel special and usually perform in a special way. This is because the role they play is built on their greatest strengths. This allows their talents to be utilized for the best benefit of the team. This requires team members to be flexible, even requiring a player on a basketball team in the position of guard to play as a forward or even as a center. Not many basketball players can do this. It takes a special talent and willingness and is extremely beneficial for the team’s benefit.

Every team member that would benefit the team must fill a role that fits the goals and needs of the organization. Of course, this includes their personal talents and abilities. Team leaders must recognize what roles should be filled by what team members. If the team leader does not make sure that roles are being filled, the team cannot succeed without making adjustments to make sure the job gets done and done well.

H. Substitute Players

No team can be a winning team without substitutes. While the starting players of

a sports team are important, those who come off the bench are vitally important. Some who spend much time on the bench may mistakenly believe that they are not making a contribution. With this kind of thinking, they will not bother to prepare the way the starting team does.

Substitute players provide depth to a sports team. In business, “substitute players” are vital, because there are times when the regular team members cannot fulfill the responsibility. In business, substitute players must be selected, equipped, and developed as a regular player for the team to be as strong as it needs to be. Those who typically are not starting players set the tone for the whole team’s level of play. This is because a team practices against its own players. The starters practice against the bench team members, and if those bench team members are weak, the starter’s performance will not improve. A good bench member will do their best to improve constantly in order to challenge the starting team member.

When the “level of play” in an organization is high every day, that team’s performance will be excellent when it really counts.

I. Organizational Sense

Knowing what is happening within the organization is critical for a team to win. In sports, this has to do with how many seconds are left on the clock or how many points a team is behind in the score. In business it is to know where the organization stands in reference to its goals and how it compares to its competition. While not all team members are gifted with this sense, the team leader is responsible to keep the team players informed. This means he checks on the team’s progress, listening to other players in order to know where the team stands. When all team members know where the whole team stands, they are better able to be successful as a team.

J. Sacrifice

Nothing helps teams succeed like sacrifice. Time and energy must be sacrificed by each team member in order to practice and prepare for the game. We may see that a certain member of a sports team has been benched for a period of time because they did not show up for practice. This is a coach holding the team member accountable. Further, each team member has to be willing to sacrifice their own desires and give up a part of themselves for the benefit of the team.

Desire and dedication to the team requires sacrifice. This is true in sports, in business, and in war. General Norman Schwarzkopf says that the greatest lesson he learned during the Gulf war had to do with the soldier on the ground. He said that the fundamental military truth did not have to do with how many tanks or airplanes they had nor how much military might an army might have. He said that the soldier on the ground and the airman in the air had to have the will

to win, the character to go into battle, the belief that his cause was just, and the support of his country. Without these, airplanes and tanks were irrelevant.

Conviction that the cause is worth the effort helps bring about victory. Teams cannot succeed without that kind of commitment. Building up and developing a ministry team will help us to accomplish levels of success we never thought possible. Teams that have a great vision can help common people attain goals beyond their own abilities. Success is multiplied when those members are not just common people, but leaders.

VI. HELPING TEAMS

Team leadership in ministry has to do with vision, strategy, relationships, faith, energy, follow through, and reading a little. These seven points are the spokes on the "wheel of compassion." Leadership has everything to do with helping others. Compassion has everything to do with helping others.

A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean." Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured. (Mk.1:40-42, NIV)

Jesus was the greatest team leader of all time. He trained 11 men that turned the world right side up. As a team leader, whether a pastor or a traveling ministry person, the responsibility of the team leader is to develop other leaders. If we only develop followers, who will take our place when our time is done?

The number one factor that a leader must have is compassion. That means that they think more about others than they think about themselves. Jesus demonstrated this when He was moved with compassion because the people of Israel were like sheep without a shepherd (Mt.9:36). Very simply, they had no leader to lead them in the right way.

Since we are to be conformed to the image of Jesus, compassion is to be in us and to be flowing to others so that it might impact households and families. This extends further to the impact of future leaders. Jesus had such compassion that He prayed for direction concerning those He was to put Himself into by training them, for He knew that they must be men of compassion. Further, He also told them to pray for laborers to go into the harvest fields (Mt.9:37-38). Jesus did this because of His love for people.

Jesus' faith always worked, because He always walked in love (Ga.5:6). Jesus actions were always love-based. Whatever energy we might have, compassion must be behind it. The compassion of God released out of us will be His compassion. Let us look at the seven spokes of the compassion wheel.

A. Vision

Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he. (Pr.29:18)

Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in. And the Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. (Jos.6:1-2)

Vision has to do with seeing. Leaders can see what God wants them to see that they might be used in building His Kingdom.

Joshua caught the vision of taking Jericho. The vision came from God to him. Vision is used to see into our future. God wants us to live with a vision, for where there is no vision people fail. Without hope or vision, we have nothing to use our faith on. Vision comes from the Word of God and the heart of God. Our vision is in our future, and our future is in our heart. God speaks into our heart concerning things that He wants done, and as we think, so are we in carrying that vision out (Pr.23:7).

B. Strategy

Joyful is the person who finds wisdom, the one who gains understanding. For wisdom is more profitable than silver, and her wages are better than gold. Wisdom is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her. She offers you long life in her right hand, and riches and honor in her left. (Pr.3:13-16, NLT)

Wisdom is the key element in any strategy plan. Just because we have vision does not mean that we are going to fulfill it. We must be wise in our planning and preparation, for it is only then that God will bring success. We do not need more authority, but we do need to know what to do with the authority we already have. This means that any strategy that comes from God, we will have to push, press, and pursue. We will have to use what we already have.

We must gain wisdom from the Word, as well as understanding. When we do so, we will find success and profitability that is greater than silver and gold. There is nothing that we can desire that will compare with wisdom, for long life, riches, and honor are bound up in it. One of the things that Paul prayed for believers was that they would receive the “...spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ” (Ep.1:17). Included in Paul’s prayer is that we would receive understanding, which is the ability to apply wisdom (v.18). The unsearchable riches of God are contained in Christ and any strategy that does not include what Christ has said will be a strategy of failure.

C. Relationships

Leaders must build relationships that help them fulfill their destiny.

He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed. (Pr.13:20)

Relationships enable us to function as effective members of the Body of Christ and to fulfill our destiny (Ep.4:15-16). Good relationships are the key to success. We can see this in Paul's life, as the greatest missionary after Christ. He was always traveling with someone and developing them as a future leader.

Loners who care only for themselves spit on the common good. (Pr.18:1, THE MESSAGE)

Some "friends" pretend to be friends, but a true friend sticks closer than a brother. (Pr.18:24, CJB)

The only way to fulfill God's destiny is to get close with people. The enemy is always trying to stir up mud to get us to jump out of the group or team. We need to learn to stay with the team, as our destiny is too great to do it alone. This means we must be part of a team in order to accomplish God's greater good. We need to "bump up against" people by going into their world. We need to be thinking about how we can get into their world, for we have what is needed to help fix something for other people, and they have what is needed to do a fix in our lives too. This is the reason that the Body, though one, has many members (1Co.12:12). We are members of that one Body. None of us are exactly like others, nor should we try to be. Each has a part to play in the Body, and each must fulfill their own responsibility (Ep.4:16).

Our responsibility is to love people. Instead of throwing rocks at someone who has hurt or offended us, we should drop our rocks, forgive them, and build a relationship with them. This is a strong key to our future success. Our relationships with people show the strength or the weakness of our spiritual life. Those who refuse to get connected with others will find a tough road ahead and no help in it.

D. Faith

"...The just shall live by faith." (Ro.1:17b)

Jesus was always around others, teaching and training them for the future. Jesus walked by faith, which He proved when He turned over this great, worldwide Gospel responsibility to 11 men. At times He upbraided them, but He was continually challenging them to use their faith and walk by it.

We, as they, find that our decisions are controlled by what we believe, not by what we feel or see in the natural sense.

"I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. (Mk.11:23-24, NIV)

Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. (Mk.9:23)

Many of us have learned to walk by faith and have gained victories. However, it is important for us to know that most deaths happen on the descent of the mountain, not on the way up. The tallest mountain in the world, Mount Everest in Nepal, has seen several deaths. The vast majority of them have taken place as men were descending from the mountain. How does this relate to ministry? We can see several ministers that faced this, such as Elijah. A great victory was won against the prophets of Baal on the mount as he called down fire to consume the sacrifice. Yet, just a few hours later he was fleeing for his life at the words of one woman. Elijah's failure was to not rest after the great victory, restoring his faith to a level it should be after the great victory. When men have a great victory in ministry, they are vulnerable, due to the expenditure of faith and energy, so as to be in a position like Elijah was.

Success never comes by accident. We frame our world with the words we are speaking (Pr.18:21). We feed upon the result or product of what we have been saying. We are actually speaking our future into existence today. That makes it all the more critical that we speak by faith what God says. Not only that, it is impossible to please God without faith (He.11:6). Therefore we must never allow distractions to break our focus of faith.

The Lord wants us to trust Him, step out on what He has said and believe Him for greatness. Faith is not a feeling, but a decision to believe, speak, and live by the Word of God. Faith is a lifestyle of confidence and trust in God. It is never just an event or a feeling. The successful leader will develop other leaders by their expression of faith. Successful leaders, those who build relationships with others, will have the opportunity to demonstrate their faith in the tough times and in the good times. As a leader of leaders, we must never become so distracted that we plant wrong thinking in those that we are training up to leadership. There is no time that we should let down our hair, so to speak, with vain words (Ja.1:26).

E. Energy

A true leader does not have to get fired up. He stays up. Holy Spirit is our

energy and strength. True leaders stay up and live by the energy of the Holy Spirit.

And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. (Ac.1:4-5)

It is God who works in us, both to will and to do his good pleasure (Ph.2:13).

When we think good thoughts, our emotions are up and we have energy. If our thoughts are bad or negative, our emotions will be down and we will find ourselves wanting to stay in bed, hiding from the situation. The power of God lives in us and His energy flows through us day by day, depending upon the way we see life and communicate our thoughts about it.

Far too many people are relying upon natural security in life. We must lose our natural security for spiritual security. We must draw our energy from the Holy Spirit and not from external things, such as caffeine or any other chemical that is used to energize the physical body. Leadership requires a spiritual energy and not a natural energy.

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. (Ac.1:8)

Since we are filled with the Spirit of God, we should choose to show energy, enthusiasm, and fire. We should choose to operate under His influence, and our attitudes will show it.

F. Follow-through

Leaders follow through and outlast the enemy.

Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised. "For in just a little while, the Coming One will come and not delay. And my righteous ones will live by faith. But I will take no pleasure in anyone who turns away." (He.10:36-38, NLT)

This is the reason James tells us that when trouble comes our way we should consider it an opportunity for great joy. Our faith is being tested, and it is an opportunity for our endurance to grow. When our endurance is fully developed, we will be perfect and complete (mature) and not need anything (Ja.1:2-4). This

is what will cause our Master to say to us, *“Well done, my good and faithful servant”* (Mt.25:21, NLT).

A good leader is still standing when the enemy gives up. It is a true leader that never quits. Seasons will change, and that true leader will allow for needed adjustments to take place. The writer of Hebrews tells us to not cast away our confidence, because there is a great reward coming (He.10:35).

There is a payday to every effort in the Kingdom. God wants us to continue our efforts, following through to completion, for we hold the key to someone else's success. While it may appear that we are going very slow like the turtle, we should understand that the turtle can win and the rabbit (hare) can be beaten. The key is endurance.

Jesus endured the cross because He envisioned us as Children of God in the future (He.12:2). He saw the result of His endurance having great benefit. There are many battles we will win, as Jesus did, simply by not giving up. Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of England during WWII, famously said, “Never give up, never give up, never give up.” His statement was based upon the knowledge that the one who continues on wins in the end. England was being bombed every night, but he held out, resolute that in the end England would be victorious. His faith in the potential end result brought victory. It looked hopeless, but he refused to concede defeat. It looked hopeless for Jesus, but three days later He arose from the dead. So what are we facing? It may look bad, but endurance will take us through to victory (Ph.4:13; 1Jn.5:4).

Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. (Jn.4:34)

G. Renewal

Leaders never stop changing and growing. God's changes are what are necessary to take us to another level. A leader must renew their own thinking by living continually with the Word of God that they might purge the “stinking thinking” that comes from the world. To renew something means to take what is old and give it back for something new. We give our old thinking to Jesus and He gives us back a good thing, new thinking that is like His.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (Ro.12:2)

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. (3 John 2)

Our soul's prosperity comes about because our mind is being renewed. We are to be renewed in knowledge according to the new man, which is the image of Jesus Christ (Co.3:10). We may be in God's perfect will today, but if we do not keep learning and growing and changing, we are not going to be there tomorrow.

We will miss His will without change and growth in our lives. The work of God is moving on, so we must make sure that we stay up with him. That means we will have to be willing to make changes, take the steps and go for that new thing God wants to do in our lives. Lester Sumrall, a minister of the late 20th century said,

"Most people never get a second revelation. They die with the first one."

How true that is. But if we will renew ourselves in the things of God, we can receive the second revelation and the third and the fourth and so on.

It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. (Lam.3:22-23)

VII. TEAM PLAYERS

Team players are those who will always look out for their team. Those who are not team players will tend to look out for themselves when trouble comes. We can see from these two statements that only the unselfish can be a true team player. This truth shows up, whether it is a basketball team, a soccer team, or a military unit. From Scripture, we can see that the major responsibility of a believer on earth is to do good for others (Mt.7:12; Mt.5:44). Just so, teams cannot succeed unless its players put others on the team ahead of themselves. While this is not always easy, it is necessary if the team is to win.

To be selfless is to have certain attitudes. This includes: a) being generous; b) avoiding internal politics; c) displaying loyalty; d) valuing interdependence over independence; e) promoting others rather than self; f) taking a subordinate role; g) giving secretly.

So how do we build a winning team? First, we must recognize that teams come in all sizes and shapes. The staff of a church is a team. A husband and wife are a team. Those who volunteer their time for a joint effort are a team. With each of these types of teams, there has to be a leader who invests in team building. By investing in the team, there are benefits to everyone on the team.

The leader of a team must first of all make a decision to build a team. This means that they will have to develop people to build a better team, which requires commitment. The second thing that leader has to do is gather the best team possible. While with a family we do not add players outside of the bloodline, other kinds of teams must have recruitment of the best potential team players as part of the process.

Building a team does not just happen. There is a cost involved. This requires the leader to dedicate time and money which could be used for personal benefit in order to bring about team productivity.

If personal agendas are first on our list, we are unlikely to pay the price to develop a team. Also involved is the fact that a team must do things together. Though individual players may do extremely well, it is from a feeling of team work, the community of the team, who spend time doing things together for the benefit of the whole. No matter what kind of team we are building, moving out of the “professional setting” into a personal setting will bring great benefits. Teams who do not connect with each other will never truly be a team, as they share no common experiences.

The true team-building leader will empower the other team members with responsibility and authority. Only through this step can future leaders of the team be brought through the trial and error of personal experience. Higher levels of performance and higher levels of leadership require team members to have authority as well as responsibility. Certainly they may fail at times, but leaders must never try to protect their position or limit the power of the others on the team. If team members who have potential are never allowed authority or power, they will find another team to play on.

A. Credit for Success

Who gets credit for success on the team determines the morale of that team. Complimenting team members for their successful efforts makes people feel good, causing them to be willing to work hard for future recognition. This can be shown by the military. Soldiers fight long and hard, braving dangerous situations, to receive recognition by a combat ribbon. That was not their original purpose, for protecting their comrades in battle and defeating the enemy were the original considerations. But, the recognition is good and elevates them in the sight of their comrades in arms. On the other hand, it should be the team leader that takes the blame when something goes wrong. To do so is to have a team that will fight for us, no matter what condition they face.

All investments are expected to produce a return over time. We pay attention and measure the progress of our investments to know what direction they are taking. This means that a team leader must observe whether they are getting a return for the energy and resources that is being invested in the team.

B. Seeing Progress

People develop at different rates of speed, but the basic outcome of investment is to see progress. This also means that if a team member is not developing, not advancing, or not living up to the investment made in them, the team leader must stop spending their time investing in that person. While this can be painful, it is required if we would eliminate great losses for the team.

Great teams are always looking for a challenge. Providing new opportunities is a great investment in a team. The wise leader who offers these opportunities will give the team a chance to grow, benefiting each team member. This means that we also are giving the team the best possible chance to succeed. The most essential task of a team leader is to remove obstacles, so that the team can have the best possible opportunity to succeed. While this likely requires personal sacrifice or helping others to work together more efficiently, it is an energizing environment that gives each person what they need to ensure their individual success as well as the team's success.

Included in this thinking of providing for the success of a team is the necessity to identify weak players and how they will impact the team. Not everyone should stay on the team, whether we really desire a change in personnel or not. While the leader may see what people can become, encouraging and equipping them to become better team players, that leader should not assume that everyone wants to go along with them.

C. Attitudes are Critical

Due to attitudes, some people do not want to change, grow, or conquer new territory. Being satisfied with the status quo, it is best to thank these people for past contributions and move on without them.

Just as some will not want to take the journey with us, others should not take that journey because of their own agenda. Those who have their own agenda should not be included on the team, for they will hinder it dramatically. Further, some people cannot take the journey. These people have certain problems that preclude them taking the journey with the team. It can be seen because they: a) cannot keep up with the team; b) do not grow in responsibility; c) do not see or connect with the long-term goal; d) do not overcome personal weaknesses; e) do not work well with other team members; f) cannot fulfill responsibilities in their area. If we have team members that have these areas of weakness, though they are not bad people, they cannot take the journey with the team.

Those people on a team with the attributes listed in the previous paragraph should be either trained or allowed to go their own way, depending upon whether they have the problems mentioned above. A great leader always tries to train people through books, conferences, new challenges, etc. A great leader will also pair up a weak team member with a good mentor. This allows the weak team member to find their own level. If their level is on another team, so be it. It is highly unlikely that weak team members will ever fix themselves.

D. Weak Members

The negative effect of a weak team member is a critical issue to the team, for the strong team members will tend to resent the weak one. Over time, the strong

team members will resent the weak one and become less effective, even to the point of questioning the leader's ability. There is no question, weak team members must be trained and helped to become strong or helped to find another team.

VIII. TEAM CREATIVITY

Creativity is a beneficial asset for any team. Teams must always use the best ideas in order to advance toward their goal. Ideas require intellectual, physical, and emotional investment if they are to be successful. Ideas are the lifeblood of organizations, and groups. So what happens if the leader has an idea and it is not the best idea? Leaders must recognize that they do not always have the best answer.

A Ideas

When another team member presents an idea that is better than the leader's idea, it will be easy to recognize a wise leader, for the wise leader will not demand their idea be used when there is a better one. Ideas are more critical to an organization than capital or experience. Besides the team members, ideas are the main asset of any organization or group, removing limits as to what can be accomplished.

Far too often leaders do not provide a climate that will generate great ideas. Innovation and progress comes because a leader is open to ideas from others, encouraging their team members to work together for the best progress of the team. Good ideas will surface in an organization when there is synergy produced among the peers of the team.

B. Great Ideas

In order to turn good ideas into great ideas, there are certain things that team leaders must recognize:

1. There are no "bad" ideas;

While some ideas are better than others, the team leader that "shoots down" an idea will find that fewer ideas are offered in the future. The open-minded leader will be willing to listen to every idea, no matter how foolish they might first seem to be. Shutting down what appears to be a bad idea tends to prevent us from discovering the good ones. When we share our thinking, innovation and value will come from that sharing. When good thoughts are shared in a collaborative environment, those who did not have the original idea will contribute, shape, and take that thought to the next level.

2. There is not just “one” idea;

God’s wisdom is available to mankind to solve problems. However, God’s wisdom may not be the first thought that comes out in a team meeting. The team leader who rushes with the first idea may find that they have chosen the wrong idea.

Allowing diversity of thought and multiple ideas will make us stronger as a team. This can be seen in the difference between communism and capitalism. Capitalistic societies generally are democracies, where a multitude of ideas are allowed. In that freedom, creativity is high, opportunities unlimited, and the potential for growth is dramatic. The free-market mentality that drives the largest economy in the world can also drive the individual organization. But that can only happen where a leader is open to ideas and options, so that the team can grow, innovate, and improve.

3. There is not just one place for ideas;

True team leaders will practice attentiveness to new ideas as a regular discipline. This means that they will see something that other people do not see, even while reading a newspaper, watching a movie, or partaking of some leisure activity. New ideas will jump out at them as they cultivate that attentiveness. As an example, one man who was in business saw a totally different avenue of business which resembled the business he was already in while on a pleasure trip. The idea that he saw and took action on fueled an additional multimillion dollar business in just a few short years. This would tell us that good ideas are often in very unusual or unexpected places.

4. There is not just one person for ideas;

No single person has a corner on the ideas that will benefit an organization. While the personality of some people would cause us not to listen closely to them, we must recognize that the greater purpose of the team requires us to listen to those with whom we have little in common.

The wise leader never rejects an idea because they do not connect well with or have rejected the person. Ideas can be very fragile when they are first brought to light. Any potentially great idea can be killed by the wrong statement, a yawn, or a smart remark. The wise leader becomes a promoter of creative people due to their contributions to the organization. They must be encouraged and protected, for some people will shoot down their ideas, stifling creativity, and destroying benefit to the organization.

5. There is no reason to take it personally if our idea is rejected;

Going further with the thought of ideas, the leader may have an idea that is rejected by others. We should never take that personally, and we must make sure we do not allow that rejection to stifle the creative process. When people's feelings are hurt, due to rejected ideas, competition instead of creativity takes place. While competition in the right avenues can be beneficial, if not directed properly, it will stifle creativity.

As a leader, the big picture on ideas and how to approach interaction with others is critical. The leader should stand up for their ideas when they know it is the answer, but also know when to compromise. If there is no passion for an idea, other team members will not take the leader seriously if he pushes to implement it.

This means that when principles are involved, we should never compromise. However, we should also remember that there are few real absolutes in life. Many times ideas have taste or opinions attached to them rather than principle. If this is the case, compromise may be the best avenue in order to accomplish the goal of the team. The team leader who encourages others and does not have to win at all costs will win respect and influence the other team members so that the whole team wins.

When we can think in terms of "our idea", rather than "my idea", we are well on our way to allowing the best idea to win and growing a team spirit.

Part II Proper Management by Leaders

I. OUR DESTINY

As Christians we need to make decisions that will change our lives. Those decisions are threefold, such as when we decide to: 1) give our lives totally to Christ; 2) be all we can be in life, refusing to settle for less; 3) raise our standards, our values and our expectations in life.

Destiny is: 1) something to which a person or thing is destined, as in fortune; 2) a predetermined course of events often held to be an irresistible power or agency. (Merriam-Webster dictionary)

The following are several quotes concerning destiny;

"It is not in the stars to hold our destiny but in ourselves."
(William Shakespeare)

"Destiny is not a matter of chance; it is a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved." (William Jennings Bryan)

"Sometimes the dreams that come true are the dreams you never even knew you had." (Alice Sebold, The Lovely Bones)

"Destiny is a name often given in retrospect to choices that had dramatic consequences." (J.K. Rowling)

"Don't confuse poor decision-making with destiny. Own your mistakes. It's ok; we all make them. Learn from them so they can empower you!" (Steve Maraboli, Life, the Truth, and Being Free)

"I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve." (Albert Schweitzer)

"No matter what your history has been, your destiny is what you create today. What are you going to create?" (Steve Maraboli, Life, the Truth, and Being Free)

"It's a funny thing, how much time we spend planning our lives. We so convince ourselves of what we want to do, that sometimes we don't see what we're meant to do." (Susan Gregg Gilmore, Looking for Salvation at the Dairy Queen)

From the understanding of the word destiny and these quotes, there are things that we should be able to deduce about it. For one thing, it will likely take courage to face our destiny. There are wonderful things that take place when we decide to take control of

what we have power over. Too many times we crave control over things we have no power to control.

Please understand that destiny is not chance. God has a plan for our lives, but what we do with what He has planned has everything to do with what the end result will be. God's plan for our lives may have to include problems which come because we do not listen and obey. But even then, problems may well be a part of our lives that we may be formed and changed into the image of Jesus Christ. Sure, we will make mistakes, but we need to learn from them and move on. This will also require that we forgive ourselves for the mistakes we make. Destiny is not poor decision-making. If we will learn from our mistakes, we will grow and become who we should be.

What we need to do is live life to the fullest and view every day as a wonderful opportunity to fulfill God's destiny for our lives. That means we should be planting seeds of happiness, hope, success and love. God's Word requires that those things we plant come back to us in abundance (Ga.2:20). Yes it is true, the right things we should do and the hard things are usually the same.

A. Stop Wrong Actions

There are many things that we should stop doing or being:

1. Gossip;

If we would refuse to verbally defame people and only speak good and encouragement to others, our life would be different in that others would speak well of us.

2. Worry;

We should refuse to worry about things we cannot control and focus on what we can. We should live in air-tight compartments, taking effective action on the things we can change. Remember, worry is simply negative faith- believing that the enemy's plan for our life will come true.

3. Slothfulness;

We were put on earth to achieve the goal God set for us and to live out our purpose. We should do so with purpose, so lying around in bed will negate the reaching of that goal.

Proverbs 12:24 speaks of the slothful person being placed under tribute. This has to do with conquered race, which faces great burdens while their conquerors are free from such burdens. The slothful person inevitably descends into pauperism and servitude (1Kg.9:21).

4. Holding grudges;

To hold a grudge is to gain bitterness in our soul. It is a simple thing to just let go, but our ego often refuses to allow that. Our self-will tries to rise up and wants revenge. As we allow this to take place, the very fact of wanting revenge begins to control, limit, repress, and discourage us from being our true self. We must learn to forgive and break free from people and things that poison or dilute our spirit.

If we will learn to bear patiently with the faults and infirmities of others, refusing to magnify imperfections of others, being longsuffering, we will experience much peace that is otherwise lost.

5. Trying to please people;

It is unwise to try to convince someone to love, respect, or commit to us. There are people who cannot be pleased. If we will walk in our destiny, we will do so by pleasing God and not man.

6. Being controlled by the past;

Our lives often would be different if we did not allow them to be defined by our past. If we allow our history to interfere with our destiny, we will not be awakened to the opportunity to accomplish God's purpose and plan. It may be true that we have no money, no education, and grew up on the "wrong side of the railroad tracks." The truth is, that makes little difference. God is an infinite God, with infinite power working on the inside of us, to bring about His purpose (Ep.3:20). But if we allow our past to control us, we will never see the power that He is, working in us as it should.

7. Wrong associations;

The fact is, if we hang out with the "chickens", we will not be able to fly with the "eagles". We were made to soar, but if our head is always down scratching in the dirt, looking for a worm, we will find the worm and not the sky. We need to come down to the point of believing that "I can fly."

8. Being distracted;

Distraction is a great enemy of direction and destiny. Solomon faced this, as he deviated from his calling to lead and be a light to the nations (1Kg.11:1-43). God raised up adversaries to steer him back to his priorities (v.14, 12). But he was self-absorbed and faced the loss of God's presence and anointing. He became consumed with the pursuit of pleasure and found emptiness.

9. Procrastination;

Everything that happens in our lives, including success or failure, begins with a decision. Our destiny is shaped by our decisions. Our decisions determine our tomorrows. To procrastinate is to refuse to take action. The outcome of procrastination is what will determine and shape our destiny. Will we refuse procrastination, making good decisions, so that we do not fail in life?

Actions speak far louder than words. In fact, as James says, faith without action is nothing (Ja.2:20). If we are unhappy with our lives, then we need to stop what we are doing and start doing things differently. As we change our actions, we can sow a seed of a different kind, thus receiving a different harvest.

10. Blaming conditions;

Our condition or circumstance actually has nothing to do with our destiny. There are those who have come from humble beginnings that make it to the top because they refused to allow their poor background to stop them.

B. Take Right Actions

1. We must have a goal;

If we want to shape our destiny, we must have a goal or a dream of what we would like our future to be like. In the near future, what would we like to see happening or accomplished in our lives? What changes would we like to see? It will require having a goal and applying it. Steve Maraboli says;

“If you have a goal, write it down. If you do not write it down, you do not have a goal - you have a wish.”

2. Consider the following questions;

What is it we can do in the immediate to change our future? (Pr.27:12; 16:3, 9)? What habit should we change that is hindering us? What training or courses can we take that will move us to the next level of our life? Is there someone that we need to meet who will be a positive influence in our life?

3. Take appropriate actions at appropriate times;

Some of the greatest failings in life are brought about because a person sees things that need to be changed and refuses to change them. To fail

to do so is to stifle our destiny. It is not where we start in life that matters, but where we are determined to end up. Our decisions matter.

4. Use God's standards;

God has standards that are impeccable. They are written in His Word, readily available for us. As we know what to expect of ourselves, we can raise our standards higher and act accordingly. That means we will have to discover the things or the habits we can no longer entertain in our lives. To do so is to believe in God's power in our lives. The standards of God's Word we follow will release our possibilities, shape our thoughts, motivate our actions, and produce results.

5. Meditation is important;

It requires discipline to meditate on things that matter in life. This means we will have to invest our available resources and time where they will be more productive. Some positive steps toward this are:

- a. Do not major in minor things;
- b. Walk in the plans of God;
- c. Learn new things; grow in new areas and friendships;
- d. Study to increase knowledge; be innovative and creative.

6. Follow through is critical;

We should never make a decision that we do not intend to follow through on. We should be committed to our decisions, cutting off anything that will obstruct or hinder us.

7. Think long-term;

Life will not be changed overnight, so we must have a long-term focus. Small decisions we make along the way will eventually mature and produce fruit.

8. Avoid short-term gratification;

Short-term solutions often become long-term problems. Avoid the short-term fix and be committed to long-term results. Recognize that God's delays are not denials, for He thinks long-term.

9. Be willing to change;

Anything can be changed in our life if we have enough motivation. That means we need to have a sense of urgency in getting started.

10. Have a plan;

If we have no sense of the direction we wish to go, we will never arrive at a desired goal. It is necessary to have a workable, practical plan to help us achieve our desired goals.

11. Protect the mind;

We become what we think; if we will develop right thinking, we will succeed in life. It may take some period of time to develop and establish new thought patterns, but it is well worth it to avoid the negative environments and negative people in order to stop their hindrance as we pursue our destiny.

II. SPIRITUAL LIFE

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Mt.16:24-26).

The spiritual life of a man is the most important thing he can take care of. Spiritual life is filled with paradoxes. These include: 1) losing our life for Christ in order to find it; 2) giving ourselves to God in order to receive His blessing; 3) dying to self that we may be truly alive; 4) becoming a servant in order to lead; 5) becoming a child in order to inherit the Kingdom.

Moving in true spirituality will cause us to blast through our barriers and limitations, bringing us into intimate fellowship with our Creator. This is where we learn the true meaning of life and what true success is. It is to become sensitive to the Spirit of God, our own inner spirit, and the spirits of our fellow sojourners.

Often men will bring about their own bondage due to greed and the unnecessary accumulation of false wealth. As they do this, they stop being masters and become servers of this world system. Contentment is a wonderful condition for the believer. It means they have slowed down and ceased rushing after the world. It is to enter into a life of serenity, of silence, solitude and inner prayer where all bondages are cast off and we began to walk in a deeper life with Christ.

A. True Spirituality

True spirituality is acquired by surrendering to Christ, making him Lord over our lives (Ro.10:9-10). As we do so, we learn to walk in obedience to the Word (Lk.6:46; Jn.14:15; 1Sa.15:22-23). This will require determination. As we set ourselves on this path, we will begin to learn to walk in love (1Jn.4:19; 1Co.13:13), and in His righteousness (2Co.5:21; Php.3:9).

As we walk that way, we must continually guard our hearts from evil and greed. This is because we live in a world that is full of spiritual contamination and that requires that we protect our faith (Ps.51:10-12; 1Co.1:4-9; Pr.23:15-23). Part of this is done because we stay in fellowship both with Christ and other believers (He.10:25; Php.2:1-11; Ro.12:10-16).

It is vital to true spirituality to nourish our spirit constantly with the proper spiritual diet. That means that we bring our whole being to God. God will deal with us as a whole person, if we allow it, and will change us in His own way and timing. It is vital that we do not leave parts of our life hidden, but bring them to His healing light. That includes making sure we are rooted in sound doctrine and maintaining the proper course with our values firmly established in the Word.

B. Spiritual Diet

The Word of God is the staple of a good spiritual diet. It is His spiritual food that will strengthen our inner being. God uses His Word to transmit His thoughts, illuminate our minds, reveal His will and wisdom, and give life, healing and power to us. His Word provides practical solutions to life's challenges and problems which guarantee true success, happiness, and prosperity, His way. His Word contains direction to bring up our family, run our business and establish our values in life. God's Word helps us put things into proper focus in relation to His infinite wisdom.

True discipleship is obedience to the teachings of the Master. His teachings point us toward liberty from our own slavery, into the perfect freedom that only comes from the Master. If we will continue in His Word, we will know the truth and it will make us free from everything that would hinder us. Through His Word, we learn to trust Him as a Father (Jn.8:31-32).

Joshua took the challenge of staying focused on God's Word (Jos.1:8). By doing so he became one of the greatest leaders in history. As we read and meditate upon God's Word, it becomes part of our thought life. This makes it easier for us to set values and standards based on His Word. God has promised true success to those who will faithfully observe and meditate upon His wisdom (Ps.1:2-3; Jos.1:8). If we study Joshua carefully, we can see that it is a self-actualized life God wants us to live. While this true success comes only from God, we have a part to play in. Both Joseph and Daniel had this kind of success. Everywhere

they went, success was waiting for them, even in the midst of enemies, repression, confusion, persecution, and hopeless situations. They were like trees planted by the streams of water. We can be, too (Ps.1:2-3).

This world system has a philosophy of self-help. We must not settle for or allow ourselves to become confused by carnal philosophies. God's Words and thoughts should be in the center of our heart. That is the only way they can bring life and power to our inner man. They will generate healing, health, and power to our wounded spirits, memories and relationships (Pr.4:20-23).

C. Study God's Word

It is necessary for man to maintain a teachable attitude if he is to be the leader God wants him to be. That means that we apply ourselves to study, allowing His Word to be engrafted and rooted in our lives. The Word of God is His authority and Handbook, so we should know it above all else (Ps.32:8-9). Holy Spirit is our Teacher, who will lead us and guide us into all truth.

As we study the Word of God, we should develop a listening ear. As we train our spirit to listen and meditate upon the wisdom of God we will find our learning and our relationship with the Lord grows deeper and deeper. We increase learning both with our spirit and with our ears. We do this by reading the Scriptures aloud. As we read the Scripture, we should listen, consent, and submit. This is to apply our minds to the knowledge of God.

We should never limit self to a natural way of thinking. As we study the Scripture, we will find that we will begin to think from God's perspective (Pr.8:11; 22:17-18). As we allow God's thoughts to take over our lives, higher knowledge, quick understanding, and a spirit that easily processes ideas will become active in us. As we do this, we will find that we do not spend as much time talking, just for the sake of talking (Is.50:4-5).

It is important for us to learn to control our tongue. We will never be effective listeners until we learn to control our tongue (Ja.3:2, 6). The Lord tells us to *"Be still and know that I am God."* Some people function in life as if they have diarrhea of the mouth; yet it is possible to discipline the tongue (1Pe.4:11).

Study of the Word builds God's power in our lives, giving us something to minister to others (Pr.25:11). It should be our goal to minister life through our words to everyone we meet (Ec.10:12-14). That means that we stop saying wrong things to people, allowing God to help us take charge of our tongue and know the right things to say at the right time.

D. Faith

Faith is that invisible force that links us to God and the supernatural (He. chp.11). Faith is the eye that sees and believes in God. Faith clings to God and receives His promises. Faith is important because it is impossible to communicate with God without it. Therefore, we need to learn to develop a personal faith that is based on God's Word, a faith rooted in the heart of God which is revealed to us as His Word illuminates and transforms our natural mind.

E. Taking Care of Our Faith

To take care of our faith, we will need to program our mind with God's Word. His Word has life in it. If we will allow His Word to work freely in us, it will instill His thoughts in us and cause us to see things His way. Only then can we function as He functions- by faith.

Right confession is vital to faith's operation. If we are confessing something other than what the Word of God says, we will get the results of what we have said and not what God has said. Our words have great power over our own lives, so our words can be either constructive or destructive to our faith.

It is necessary for us to put our faith into practice. As we put our faith into practice, we will find it to be stronger and more useful (He.11:6; Mt.17:20-21). That means that we will need to learn to: a) Stand by faith (2Co.1:24; 1Co.16:13); b) live and walk by faith and not by sight or by natural inclinations (2Co.5:7; Ga.3:11; Ro.1:17). The winners in this life are the people of faith, those who are positive and optimistic.

F. Spiritual Exercise

Just as our physical body needs a nutritious diet balanced with a healthy life-style and exercise, the leader's spirit also needs a balanced diet which will build faith and develop an inner discipline of rest and communion with God. This will require getting alone in a secluded place in order to hear from God. Society is noisy and we are often too busy or trapped in an endless rat race to hear from God. But if we will spend the time alone with Him, we will stop living shallow and empty lives.

Peace is only found when we learn the art of solitude (Jn.14:25; 16:33). That will require us stealing away to a still, quiet place, so we can get in touch with ourselves and with our Master. This will cause our minds to calm down from the rush of activities and busyness of our lives. In that place of solitude, we will be able to face ourselves as we truly are. It is there we can become transparent before God without being intimidated, allowing Him to bring healing in our lives. It is there that we will find a way to rearrange our busyness so that we can accomplish more and yet spend less time having to do so.

G. Meditation

The word “meditate” means: 1) to focus one's thoughts on something (Ps.77:12); 2) to reflect on or ponder over a matter; 3) to plan or project in the mind; 4) to engage in contemplation or reflection.

There is nothing better on which to meditate than God's Word. It renews our mind and refreshes our spirit (Jos.1:8). If we delight in God's Word, and meditate upon it, we shall be like a “...tree planted by the rivers of water...” We will bear fruit in season, our leaf will not wither, and all we do will prosper (Ps.1:2-3).

Scripture tells us that we should be thinking on those things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and encouraging; that is, things of virtue. These things will help fix our mind with strong principles which will protect us from spiritual dangers. Our mind needs good, positive, anointed information to help us make right decisions and choices (Php.4:8).

There is an emptying process that begins as we move away from the overpowering elements of the world around us into God's Presence. Jesus set a good example for us to follow. He often turned inward to relate to the inner (spiritual) world. This gave Him and will give us power to deal with the outer world. Jesus lived from the inside out, and we should also. Like every other treasure, the good life He has promised is buried and needs to be brought up to the surface.

H. Meditation's Method

God desires us to meditate on the Word (Jos.1:8; Ps.19:14). We are not talking about that which is promoted in Eastern religions, but that which is based solely on the Word of God. Following are principles that we should practice in order to meditate on His Word:

1. Find a place where we will not be disturbed or rushed;
2. Relax, calm down, shutting out all worries and prepare self to commune with our inner being and our Creator;
3. Welcome God's presence and ask the Holy Spirit to watch over us and help us in meditation;
4. Slow down, relax and concentrate;
5. Choose a Scripture to meditate on, such as one which we desire to receive revelation on.

A leader's life that is dedicated to this kind of discipline will have a spirit that is more alert and receptive, capable of dealing with feelings more creatively and constructively. They will find that their spirit is more open to God, and their communication will not depend on limitations of the mind. It is in these times that our ego will be broken down and humbled to enable our souls to respond to God's love, meekness, and joy.

I. Inner Prayer

Inner prayer is not to be a mechanical process, for it will lose its meaning and purpose if we do it mechanically. Inner prayer is that prayer which comes from deep within us, born of the Spirit, and it is an expression of a life that has been poured out before the Lord on the altar of sacrifice. It begins with yielding and laying down all defenses and barriers that separate our rational consciousness from the depth of our inner self. It is not an activity, but a life that is silently adjusting itself to the symphony of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is to find our true identity and become free from unnecessary fears and struggles. It is to release self-importance, demolishing hypocrisy, anxiety, and restlessness that keep us in bondage.

In this type prayer, we allow the silence and the quietness of God to speak to our heart, for, in the silence, the voice of God is heard more clearly. Instead of pleading and presenting our needs to Him, we become open to His will and desires in our lives. As we learn to listen to Him more attentively, we gradually breathe in His strength. To do so is to deepen our prayer life and be strengthened for those things that are to come.

J. Jesus and Prayer

Jesus was up and prayed early in the morning, before all other activities, which was the secret of His spiritual power. He spent much time in solitude and prayer (Mk.6:46). He left activities behind and the burden of things that could hinder progress in ministry. He sought the quiet place to be alone, contemplate, commune and to pray (Lk.6:12).

K. Us and Prayer

The leader who seeks to find the treasures of a spiritual life, as well as to help others find it, will have to seek God with his whole heart (Je.29:13). That means that we will have to humble ourselves and turn away from wickedness (2Ch.7:14). As we seek forgiveness, healing will be the result, both in our individual lives and in our nation. Of course, we should be praying in the Spirit on all occasions (Ep.6:18; Php.4:6; Co.4:2). Scripture encourages us to be alert and always keep on praying (Lk.18:1). That means we never give up, always depending on His strength.

We are to always be seeking His face (Ro.8:26). While we have many weaknesses, the Holy Spirit will help us through all of them if we are seeking after the Lord. He is interested in our success more than we are, so He intercedes for us with expressions that are beyond words (Ro.8:26). God searches our hearts often because that is where His Kingdom is in the present day (Ro.8:27). Thank God for the Holy Spirit who intercedes for us in accordance with God's Will.

III. TENDING TO THE MIND

The leader who would be effective will find that he must control what goes on in his mind. It is our responsibility to control and improve our minds. Our minds are the most important asset we have. It requires constant care, for it is in our mind that all things start. Success or failures are nurtured in our minds, as well as battles being fought, and lost or won. Our minds are the home of great ideas, achievements, dreams, aspirations, and visions.

From the above statements, we can see that it is very important to monitor what we are thinking about. Everything we take into our minds comes through the five sense realm, which affects the way we think and reason. For this cause it is important to test with the Word of God what comes to us, that we may know if it is of right values and standards (Pr.23:7). We should take full responsibility for the things we think and act on (Php.4:8).

God gave us a mind to use, and as we put it to use, it will become more active and productive. God intends for the leader to utilize his mind to its fullest potential. That will require constant renewal of the mind by the Word of God. As we do so, it brings about a spiritual transformation which enhances growth, both in our spirit and in our soul.

Man is a three dimensional being. He is a spirit, has a soul, and lives in a body. The spirit deals with the spiritual realm; the soul deals with the mental realm; the body deals with the natural or physical realm. The mind, which is our soul, has the ability to think, understand, make decisions, perceive, feel, and will. That is where our emotions and actions are determined.

A. Two Kinds of Minds

The Bible makes it clear to us that there are two types of minds existing in this world. First, the unregenerate mind, which is the mind of a natural, unsaved man; secondly, the mind of the Believer.

The unregenerate mind is a mind that is darkened (Ep.4:17-18), blinded (2Co.4:4), depraved (1Ti.6:5), defiled (Ti.1:15), and dead (Ro.8:6-7). In general, the mind of a natural man is spiritually crippled. It is unable to relate to God, because it is shielded from the truth and filled with misinformation about the Word, about God and about His Kingdom.

The regenerated mind is the mind of Christ (1Co.2:16), and the Bible calls it a sound mind (Ro.12:2). The regenerated mind comes about because of transformation. This transformation takes place because the mind has been renewed (Ro.12:2). We have been programmed by the world system, up to the time of salvation (and further if we allow it), so we must have transformation of our mind if we will think like God. God's Word will take the place of uncontrollable thoughts, impure mental pictures, confused ideas, wandering thoughts, and double-mindedness if we will apply ourselves to getting our minds transformed.

The mind of a Christian is a mind that is peaceful (Ph.4:6-7; Ro.8:6; Is.26:3), motivated (Php.3:14), renewed (Ro.12:2), willing (1Ch.28:9), a right mind (Lk.8:35), and an obedient mind (He.8:10). Unfortunately, not all Believers have this kind of mind. There are some things that are required of the Christian mind which include: 1) to be illuminated; 2) have an eternal perspective; 3) seek God's insight.

God can give us exceptional wisdom, understanding, and knowledge to help us accomplish His work here on earth. God is capable of illuminating our mind as He did King Solomon's, so we should be careful not to limit God's power.

When we join with the Scriptures to allow our mind to become illuminated and transformed by the power of God's Word, we learn to fully depend on Him. As we do so, we will find that we can face challenges without giving up. We will also be able to accept discipline and authority willingly. We will stop limiting the power of God in our lives, and move beyond the natural to the supernatural (Ro.12:2). Every leader and every believer's mind needs to be renewed by God's power (Php.2:5). We should ask God to give us the mind of Christ, so we can perceive things as He does (Ep.4:23-24; Mt.12:35).

IV. FINANCIAL FREEDOM

God's Word gives us guidelines on how to acquire and use wealth. Unfortunately, some Christians have hurt themselves in one way or another for lack of proper teaching on this subject. We need to gain a proper perspective on wealth, and the only correct way to do it is to see what God's Word says about it (Ec.5:19; Ps.112:1, 3; Pr.8:21; 1Kg.2:3; Mt.6:33; 1Ch.29:12; De.8:18; Ps.35:7).

God's financial attitude is very positive toward us, as long as we acquire the material wealth in an honest way and use it wisely for His glory. God's Will for us is to achieve financial freedom so that we may be able to serve Him and those in need around us.

A. Financial Bondage

Financial bondage is a hindrance to every leader and believer. We can tell when financial bondage is stopping us from accomplishing all God wants us to do. Some warning signs are: 1) excessive debts that are overdue with no visible way

to pay them; 2) thoughts dominated by “get rich quick” schemes; 3) inability to supply the needs of our family; 4) not living within our means; 5) losing sleep due to worry about financial lack; 6) being dishonest in financial matters.

B. Causes of Financial Bondage

The most dramatic cause of financial bondage is when we do not trust God with our finances. A second cause is that we expend excessively, buying on impulse. A third cause is to refuse to obey God in our giving. These are symptoms that show up when we try to keep up with our neighbors. Another cause is that we misuse our finances and do not plan for the future.

Also, we can find financial bondage caused by unwise business decisions and getting involved in illegal deals. Slothfulness is a prominent cause of financial bondage. Others are driven by greed and lavish living. For some believers, the cause of financial bondage is the fact that they fail to tithe and are then robbing God. Others have a spirit of ungratefulness or stinginess. At times Christians may run ahead of God's plan, have the wrong job or simply make too little to make ends meet. God wants us to be financially free.

C. Financial Freedom

It is possible for anyone and everyone to achieve financial freedom by sincerely following the financial principles found in God's Word. One thing we have to know is that financial freedom is not measured by how much money we have or the abundance of our material possessions. We may have a lot of possessions and still be in financial bondage; we may have less, and have financial freedom.

Some people seem to have a “Midas Touch”, with everything they touch turning to gold. Yet others find it very difficult. God, the giver of wealth, will only entrust us with what is within our ability to manage. He will never give to us an amount of finances that would destroy us. That means there are certain things we should do if we desire to achieve financial freedom. These include:

1. Put God first, and build on a good foundation (Mt.6:33);

We do so by being faithful to the God Who owns everything, and transferring the ownership of all our possessions into God's hands. We are to be His steward (Jos.1:8; Mt.25:23).

2. Stay away from debt;

It is important to keep out of debt as much as possible (Pr.22:7; Ps.37:21; De.28:1, 12). Debt can cause many problems. We are to keep out of debt to insure that we pay our bills on time. That means we will have to

think before we spend. This can be done by developing a budget and planning ahead, so that we may spend wisely.

Further, we must never fail to be a hard worker, whether it is for someone else or for ourselves. It is important that we start out early in life with a good work ethic. True and lasting success means we are willing to pay the right price (Pr.22:29; 31:13-17). This includes: a) working with delight; b) rising early in the morning; c) searching for good buys before making major purchases; d) being creative with our finances; e) refusing to be lazy.

3. Be a giver;

Giving to God's work guarantees financial help from God. God adds increase as we learn to share our blessings with others (Lk.6:38; Pr.3:27-28). That means we learn to trust God with the finances we receive. Poverty is not the gateway to spirituality. Both wealth and poverty have the potential to take us closer to God or move us away from Him, depending on our attitude. We can view wealth as a tool to be used by God to further the Gospel. We can view poverty as a reason to cry out to God, get into His methods of building wealth, and follow His financial plan. Wealth, by itself, is not evil. In fact, God desires our prosperity (3Jn:2). But, let us also remember that prosperity tends to pollute, while persecution tends to purify.

3. Learn to manage money well;

If we do not manage our money well, we will have money problems. Spending more because we are making more is not wise. This is a major reason for a budget that is wise and to follow it faithfully. We should learn to invest in God's work and for future use, not buying things impulsively, but working them into our budget (Pr.13:23; 21:17; 27:23-24; 6:6-11; Ec.5:8).

4. Setting aside for ourselves;

We should be setting aside finances on a regular basis to be put in some kind of saving or investment program. The amount does not matter as much as our regularity in doing so (Pr.21:20). God wants us to have wealth so that we may accomplish certain things: a) serve Him in spreading the Good News; b) generously help the needy; c) meet our own needs, our family's needs, and the needs of God's family; d) learn how to share with others.

D. Dangers in Wealth

God does not intend for us to gain wealth unjustly (Ja.5:4; Ps.62:10). If we do so it proves that we have an unhealthy love of wealth, which is a wrong attitude (Lk.12:15; Ec.5:10). The love of money is the root of all evil (1Ti.6:10), so a leader must be very careful to not have that kind of attitude attached to their life. To do so puts us in danger of ruining our spiritual life and destroying our health, as well as our family. Possessions are never to dominate the life of a leader; we are to be controlled only by the Holy Spirit.

It is easy to become excited over some item that we think we need, especially when we are thinking about buying some expensive item. It is important to not allow our excitement or our desire to cloud our judgment. This has to do with thinking long-term. When we think long-term, we will set a budget, plan ahead, and move toward being out of debt, rather than going deeper in debt.

This often has to do with refusing to be patient. Illegal and destructive schemes will bring us much harm and heartache. If the leader gets involved in them, we can be sure that the enemy will trap him in such a way as to destroy his credibility, integrity, and effectiveness in ministry.

E. Tithes and Offerings

The way to grow our wealth is to begin by recognizing that God owns everything, and He honors us by allowing us to give back to Him the tithe and offerings. As we tithe, we are expressing our gratitude to God and recognizing Him as the Giver, Provider, and Owner of all we have. Tithing was instituted in the Old Testament, before the Law, and was reaffirmed by Jesus (Mt.23:23) and by Paul (1Co.16:2). We find three types of tithes in the Old Testament: 1) the worship tithe (Le.27:30); 2) the festival tithe (Le.27:22-27); 3) the charity tithe (De.14:28-29).

Tithing has a purpose, which includes teaching us to reverence the Lord (De.14:22-23). As we do so God blesses our income (Ma.3:9-10). If we refuse we are placed under the curse because we have robbed God (Mal 3:9-10). Also, if we refuse to help the poor, we keep them in their need, and rob them of an opportunity to prosper.

Tithing also is a way to honor the Lord (Pr.3:9-10). As we honor God with our substance, He honors us by taking care of us. Some have said that tithing was strictly for the Old Testament, but God has actually taken the limits completely off of our giving (2Co.9:6-9). Offering and tithes are actually seed faith. When we give cheerfully we plant seeds that God multiplies back to us. We are to make our giving a ministry and a form of worship (2Co.9: 12-14). As we do so, God opens the windows of heaven, actually the "floodgates," that bring more than we

could ever possibly use. Besides opening the floodgates, God rebukes the devourer for us and causes the fruit of our labor to increase (Ma.3:10-11).

F. Regarding Poverty

The person who refuses instruction from God will have a financial problem (Pr.13: 18). We need all the good advice and wisdom we can get, so before we make big decisions or take critical steps, we should seek counsel (Pr.20:13). Another factor is that much sleep and laziness go together. The outcome is usually procrastination, which leads to poverty (Pr.20: 4; 20:13; 10:4).

V. OUR SELF-IMAGE

It is important for a leader to have a good self-image. Godly self-esteem is based on the measure of faith that we have concerning our position in Christ. It indicates how well we value, judge, and accept ourselves. It is directly related to our Godly self-respect and our Godly self-confidence.

Our self-image is the way we see and evaluate ourselves. It is the way we think about ourselves, rather than the way other people think about us. For example, we may think we are weak and ugly and inadequate, but, according to the Word, we know that is not from God. How we perceive ourselves affects every aspect of our lives.

Thoughts, whether good or bad, have power. They create and shape our way of life, because they affect how we talk, and how we talk determines what we receive. We become what we think. (Ps.119:73; 139:14-15).

The principle of having a Godly self-image is rooted in the fact that all human beings are created in God's own image and likeness, and that we are all important and special in our own unique way. Every person should have the freedom to be different, special, and accepted whether or not they measure up to our standards, values or social criteria. All people deserve dignity, nobility and respect as God's special individual creation.

A. Self-Image

A poor self-image will hinder a leader, causing many unpleasant experiences for them. It is actually a serious handicap capable of paralyzing and inhibiting our ability to relate to or communicate with other people, which is vital for a leader. A good and healthy self-image, on the other hand, is a great asset. It will make us feel loved, accepted, wanted, and capable of making right decisions.

B. Healthy Self-Image

The leader who has a healthy self-image normally has strong values. That means they possess positive motivating principles because they know who they

are in Christ. They know that they are important and unique, and that they are loved.

Leaders who have a healthy self-image are careful not waste valuable time and energy worrying. They know making bad choices and mistakes can be corrected by God, but their performance has nothing to do with their relationship with God.

Leaders with a healthy self-image are capable of dealing with all kinds of problems. They approach every circumstance and situation with confidence and understanding, knowing God has delivered them from condemnation and guilt.

Leaders with a healthy self-image do not feel superior or inferior to others, but equal to others. These leaders will not allow success to “puff them up” (1Co.13:4). They are able to accept praise without false modesty or pride.

Leaders who have a healthy self-image will not allow others to dominate or intimidate them. Too, they will not allow others to manipulate them. They refuse to allow the opinions of men to control or manipulate their behavior or influence their decision-making. They know who they are in Christ and they stand true to the Word of God.

Leaders with a healthy self-image are not dependent on the opinions of others. They refuse to let unworthy standards or values influence them negatively. They are confident as to who they are, what they want to be and what they are called to be.

Leaders with a healthy self-mage know that their thought-life is a vital aspect of their living. They create and meditate on positive images, the spiritual things that we are to think on (Php.4:8). They are instant in recognizing and resisting carnal thoughts and temptations. They do not have an inferiority complex, which is basically a refusal to believe that they are objects of God's Love. They accept the fact that others in the Body of Christ love them, having a healthy concept of themselves, their potential, their skills and their self-image. They refuse to feel sorry for themselves. They resist mediocrity. They “love themselves” scripturally (Mt.22:39).

C. Bad Self-Image

When a leader has a bad self-image, they will find it hard to build relationships. A bad self-image causes a person to have a problem relating to others in a relaxed and informal way. They continually feel that they must prove themselves. This also causes them to have problems making decisions. They find themselves reluctant to make decisions and often they will make decisions in order to secure the approval of others. For that reason, those with a bad self-image worry about what others think about them.

It is very difficult for people with a bad self-image to believe anything positive about themselves. They are always prone to receive and believe negative statements or thoughts. But this type self-image can be transformed by God's Word. God's Word declares our true self and we should not ever remain trapped in the prison of a negative self-image.

D. Self-Esteem and Relationships

How we feel about self affects how we relate to others. This will affect the quality of our relationships. Those with bad self-esteem tend to not reach out to others or allow others to reach out to them. It seems they have a wall built around themselves because of insecurity which causes them to be unstable in many relationships.

The leader with low self-esteem will have a hard time making genuine friendships. That is because people will always sense the unspoken message we are communicating to them. If we feel that we are not worth loving or that we are not interesting, others tend to respond to us that same way, making it difficult for them to express their love for us. When our feelings are easily hurt because of insecurities or we tend to over-react or take offense when people make comments about us, it generally causes people to pull away from us.

People tend to be attracted to those that have a healthy self-esteem. The person who feels good about themselves becomes more secure, relaxed, and less concerned about what others might be thinking or saying about them.

E. Building a Good Self-Image

To build a good self-image, the leader first of all has to protect their mind. That means they must resist negative thoughts and refuse to allow the opinions of others to take root in them. The power of negative thoughts and the negative opinions of others can put a person into a mental prison for life. Remember, self-image is not shaped by things that are happening to us, but by what we allow to settle in our minds. If we allow garbage in, garbage is what will come out.

This is why it is important to take steps to develop a confident, positive and pleasant personality. What we think of ourselves forms the foundation of our personality. With a positive self-image, we will feel competent and worthy. The more confidence we have, the more positive our self-image will be and the greater ability to cope with life's adversities. This is a critical matter, for the enemy is continuously speaking to us negative things. These are unrealistic limitations that he speaks which can affect our thought life and damage our self-image. Filling our mind with positive affirmations about ourselves is critical to our self-image.

It is important to resist self-criticism and self-depreciation. Our thoughts affect our feelings and our attitude. If we do not believe in ourselves, we will continually be trapped in mediocrity and failure. Along the same line, we should avoid those who criticize as an attempt to lower our self-esteem. It is good to recognize some words are more poisonous than a viper which bites us, and thus we should not receive them.

There are many temptations to be weak which we must resist to maintain a good self-image. Part of this is involved in concentrating on what we do best and allowing others to take responsibility in areas where we may be inadequate.

The leader should practice expressing good thoughts about others. By this, they will reinforce their own self-image. This includes being willing to help others without expecting anything in return, as well as being genuinely interested in others. Resist the temptation to be self-centered or selfish. Our interest in others will make them interested in us. This will build their respect and esteem for us. We are to have the confidence that we are modeling our life after the pattern of Christ (Ph.2:3-4).

It is vital for the leader to take control of their self-image and thought life. Practice self-discipline, self-confidence, and self-motivation instead of self-affirmation. This will vitalize our self-image and enrich our willpower. God has made His Word available for our use to renew our thought life (Ro.12:2).

F. God's Word Speaks Well of Us

We are not pieces of junk, made of inferior material. God created us fearfully, wonderfully and uniquely. We are the work of His hands (Ps.139:13-16). He has a purpose for our lives and He is able to fulfill it. Our part is to not limit His power in our lives. We are to let our self-image be rooted in God's perfect will for our lives. He loves and cares for us, even though we may not be able to fully comprehend it (Ps.138:8).

We have new strength, new authority new power in Christ Jesus, and we are complete in Him (Co.2:10). Actually, we are a royal priesthood and a chosen people. We belong to God. We are to declare the praises of Christ in our lives. (1Pe.2:9-10).

VI. EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

"Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self-control" (Pr.25:28). We are creatures of emotions; without them we cease to be human. Emotions are words beyond words. Emotions are God given, to help us feel and empathize with others and help us understand how others are feeling. Emotions can cause us to know something is wrong or needs to be changed.

It is through emotions that we can communicate needs to others without the need of limiting words. Emotions can help us know what is truly in our heart at any time. Human emotions are a state of being which is stimulated in various ways through various means. Emotions are effected by things that disturb or excite us and include many varying levels of feeling in varying degrees of satisfaction or annoyance.

A leader whose life is stable and consistent, and whose urges and desires meet with fulfillment, and whose interests are achieved successfully, tends to be emotionally stable. But, a person whose life is frustrated due to the lack of fulfillment of those urges, desires or interests, tends to be emotionally unstable. Their frustration may be caused by the lack of ability to achieve satisfaction, by an unfavorable environment or by patterns of emotional dysfunction.

Emotional urges and drives can, and often do, influence our thinking and behavior. Often our behavior is closely linked with momentary or temporary interests and desires. When that happens, little attention is given to more basic and far-reaching goal-setting activities. Even though emotions will influence our behavior they should not become the determining factor that governs our lives. This is especially true if we react negatively or adversely to them.

A. Communicating Emotions

In order to manage our emotions and feelings effectively, we first need to learn how to communicate them. That means that we need to: 1) learn how to describe our feelings in spoken words; 2) learn how to share our warm and loving emotions with others; 3) release and do away with wrong emotions.

We need to be honest. When we feel uncomfortable with a situation or with someone, we should tell them how we feel tactfully, lovingly, and in a way that will not hurt or offend them. This is because we should respect the feelings of others. Part of this is involved with not giving people advice unless it is appropriate. Negative criticism is not advisable. We should give constructive criticism, only if it is appropriate and if it appears they will accept it, otherwise we should be just a good listener.

B. Managing Emotions

Leaders need to exercise self-control so that their emotions do not become detrimental to them. Emotions may serve the purpose of mending relationships and providing successful problem solving, but they may also interfere with these purposes. Certain physiological changes may be caused by excited emotional responses and can energize the physical system for action. While this aids survival for animals struggling in combat, these emotions can be detrimental in our culture where violent emotion is frowned upon. Mild emotional states may be soothing and helpful while strong emotional states may become harmful, debilitating and disruptive.

Some emotional states, like mood and temperament, can cause internal tension which may, under some circumstances, cause harmful body consequences. Many of these problems are caused by psychosomatic disorders merely because of what we are thinking or perceiving at that time. Worry is a good example of this. What we think about a situation may or may not be correct and if we continue to meditate on an unpleasant assumption, physical problems can develop.

C. Constructive Use of Emotions

If we would use our emotions constructively, we will need to channel our feelings. Our feelings should be inclined toward something positive and constructive. Dwelling on negative situations, feeling sorry for ourselves and failing to act are detrimental to our emotional well-being.

Emotions such as fear and anxiety are matters of tension that seek to relieve themselves by behavior appropriate to the problem. For example; when someone rides a roller coaster and becomes fearful or anxious, the behavior appropriate to the situation is usually a loud shriek or scream. They are simply reacting emotionally to a given stimulation.

Meditating on God's Word can help us channel our feelings into creative ideas. When we act on the Word of God rather than reacting to an adverse outburst, our emotional expression is positive and beneficial. Feelings can be good, but we must always keep them under control. We must not allow our feelings to lapse into neutrality and this can be prevented by meditating on the Word.

Emotional development takes place through a process of maturing and learning. We learn by understanding the proper time or occasion in which our emotions can be safely expressed. Our emotions are shaped by how we express ourselves and how we conform to approved patterns of our own culture.

Vigorous exercise is effective in bringing strong feelings under control. One person confessed that whenever he was angry, distressed, or frustrated he would go out to his woodshed, take his axe and chop wood vigorously. This was his way of taking his frustrations out on the wood rather than to take them out on people or circumstances.

Ungodly emotions should never gain control of our lives. We are to control what we see and hear. We are responsible for our own thinking and our own actions. We have no right to blame others when we know it is our problem and not theirs. When we take proper responsibility for our actions, it proves our maturity and wisdom.

VII. PERSONALITY

The leader's personality can be one of his greatest assets, or a great hindrance. Our personality influences our ministry, our business, our relationships and all areas of our life. It can also be our greatest liability.

A. Important Personality Traits

Friendliness is an important personality trait. We all like friendly people, those who are warm and caring. Leaders should be friendly and easy to get along with (Ep.4:32; Pr.18:24). It is seldom that we will see a person who is friendly who does not typically have a positive attitude. This includes making an effort to find good in others, being careful that we are not critical and condemning, but always understanding, kind, tolerant, sensitive and sympathetic, determining to be cheerful at all times. (Ph.4: 8; Ep.4: 29).

Having respect for others is another important personality trait. This means we have respect for other people's opinions, feelings, and individuality. Good leaders will make other people feel important and wanted. Respect for authority and self-respect are also important (Ja.2:1-9).

Having good integrity is an important personality trait. Leaders are to be trustworthy, dependable in character, and honorable. Integrity and wisdom are important pillars of true success. If people cannot trust a leader, they will not follow them. Integrity is not built overnight, but is built into the spiritual fabric of our personality hour-by-hour and day-by-day. We need to associate ourselves with men and women of good character if we value our own reputation. It is better to be alone than in bad company. The Bible says, *"Better a poor man whose walk is blameless than a fool whose lips are perverse"* (Pr.19:1; Lk.16:10).

Having a good sense of humor is an important personality trait. This means the leader will resist being too tense or too serious. It is much easier to talk to or to listen to people who have a sense of humor. Humor adds spice to life (Pr.17:22; Ec.3:4). Along with humor, the leader must show a genuine interest in others. Genuine interest is a strong key to friendship. People will be interested in us and will also want to be around us if they know we are genuinely interested in them.

Leaders must have the ability to communicate. It is important that we learn and know how to express ourselves clearly. However, we should also know how to express ourselves with tact. That means that we will use wisdom when dealing with sensitive issues. Tactfulness will win people over, even when they have been proven wrong.

Humility is a wonderful attribute in a leader. Leaders must never allow the spirit of pride to fill their hearts. People can sense it when we think we are superior to them (Ro.12:3). While humility is important, that does not mean that we should

leave out enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is vital to stirring people into action. The leader should never dwell on negative things and always avoid self-pity. As a leader surrounds themselves with enthusiastic people, they will find that the enthusiasm is contagious. Leaders should get enthusiastic about the work they do, about their dreams, and about life.

B. Stability and Self Control

Along with these other personality traits, the leader should be stable. Stability is the ability to stand firm in what we believe, refusing to allow situations and circumstances to sway us from the truth. Stability is mastering one's self. It is refusing to let our emotions and passions control us. This leads to another attribute, self-control. Without self-control, we can easily hurt ourselves and others, both physically and emotionally. Self-control reveals inner strength. People with self-control are in charge of their own lives. They do not allow emotions such as anger, hatred, jealousy, fear, envy, or revenge to weaken their character. They do not allow negative influences to rule in their lives. They are good stewards over their possessions. They are careful how they spend their money, their time and their energy. (Mt.27:12; Ga.5:22-23).

C. Self-Confidence

While we listed this last, a very important personality trait is for the leader to have is self-confidence. Leaders have to believe in themselves. We know that we are children of God. Leaders should not allow anything or anyone to depreciate them because of that knowledge. Leaders must have confidence in their abilities. They should develop relationships with those who encourage and build them up. The best way to build self-confidence is to practice using it (Jn.16:27; Ps.43:5; Is.64:8; Ro.8:15; 1Pe.1:3).

VIII. GOAL-SETTING

The leader who tries to do something and fails, is infinitely better than those who try to do nothing and succeed. A goal reached is the terminal point of the race, or the end toward which an effort is directed. Many unhappy and unfulfilled people, who have failed to accomplish things in their life, could change their lives for the better if they would learn and adopt the principle of management by goal setting. They would be able to live more happily and accomplish much in their lifetime (Php.3:13-14). To succeed in life, one must have a defined purpose, a theme, a goal, or a vision to provide direction and guidance.

A. Importance of Setting Goals

The leader who lives their life aimlessly will feel powerless and useless, seldom accomplishing what they might if they had only set a goal. In fact, it is hard to call them a "leader." It is very unwise to live life without purposes or goals to

reach. The real tragedy of life is not in missing our goal, but in having no goal to reach. A leader may die with their dreams unfulfilled, but the true calamity is to not dream at all.

It is unfortunate how many people today are working in jobs or holding positions they do not like just because they do not know what they want in life. They lack a purpose and a plan of action. People on the cutting edge are those with goals, who know what God wants with their lives. They know that life is a battleground and, just like any other battle, it needs a battle plan. There are no short cuts to true success. We must not count on getting breaks. It is easy to learn from history that we will have to work and sweat if we are to succeed. (Pr.24:30-34; Pr.26:13-16).

Goals: 1) give us clear direction; 2) give us a foundation to build on; 3) help us budget our time, money, and resources; 4) help us to be more specific in what we are doing; 5) help us keep our values and standards in focus; 6) help us schedule our tasks; 7) are highways to our future dreams; 8) and bring the future into the present.

B. How to Set Goals

Goals have to be written down. As was said previously, if we do not have a goal written down, we only have a wish. That means it is important for the leader to take a pen and paper and write down what they want to become and achieve. They need to be as specific as possible, asking the Holy Spirit to help them bring their dreams to mind.

We should analyze our goals for specific purposes. After writing down goals, a leader will analyze them to see whether they are realistic and achievable, and then set short-term goals on how to pursue them. Again, we need to ask the Holy Spirit to give us God's guidance on each step. Prayer is critical in moving toward the right goal. So after having a goal written down, a leader will then spend time in prayer, visualizing the benefits of reaching that desired goal.

It is important to measure our assets concerning the goals we are setting. We should assess our assets, strengths, and weaknesses realistically as we set our goals. We need not underestimate ourselves. We will be amazed at how much we can do if we determine to be achievers. After all, the Power of the universe is working on the inside of us (Ep.3:20). If it is His goal, He will help us to accomplish it. Also, He will help us identify people who can help us reach our goal. People are the greatest asset in life.

Since we have set a goal, we should clarify our current position in order to know how far we must go to reach our desired destination. This includes knowing what direction we are heading and how far we have to go before we get started.

Every leader must be a thinker. This is the reason that we should brainstorm, thinking of all the possibilities we can, no matter how impossible or preposterous they may seem to be. Along with this, the leader will seek ideas from others, for none of us know everything. Then we can synthesize the ideas; put ideas together and begin to bring our dreams into reality.

We should set goals using good values and standards. We should set goals for each of the following areas of our lives: spiritual, family, financial, and social. Also, we will need to have the proper information when we set goals. Without that proper information, we will make decisions based upon improper information, and thus come up with improper goals.

C. Remember This

Sometimes we set goals and have no avenue of knowing whether we have reached them or not. Goals must be measurable so that it is easy to monitor progress. Goals also must be realistic, achievable, and within human potential that is connected to God. It is one thing to set a goal that is impossible to reach, and another thing to set a goal that is so low we can lie on the couch and do nothing to reach it. That means we should be sure to set goals high enough. They must be high enough to provide a challenge, but not too high, beyond possibilities and resources. Goals that are too low are a waste of potential and talent. Goals that are too high will frustrate and disappoint.

Deadlines are important in setting goals. We need to set deadlines for every goal; otherwise, they may never be accomplished in a proper amount of time. Those deadlines should be reasonable and realistic, always putting our health and relationships first. There are people who are so task-oriented on their way to success that they forget some of the most important things in life.

Also, it is important for the leader to have a workable plan. We have to know what it is going to take in terms of finances, time, and expertise. It is also good to know how to get help if it is needed. That means that we must be willing to change or adjust our plan if things do not work out as originally expected.

To be successful, the leader should have long-range goals and short-range goals. The long-range goal is the big picture. The short-range goal is to help us reach the long-range goal. Long-range goals will keep us from being frustrated and discouraged by short-range failures.

Most of the overwhelming feelings and the desires to give up come from a short-term focus. We must realize that success and failure are not experienced overnight. They are a result of small, right decisions made along the way. Too often we fail because we make small mistakes, such as not following up on decisions, not taking appropriate action at the proper time, or failure to take our work seriously. We succeed when we are constantly making those small but

important decisions, such as reading the right book, choosing to attend a certain meeting over another, upholding our standard, or taking a rest.

The leader must be faithful and reliable, refusing to stop until the project is finished. If we do not, it is really a waste of time to even start the project.

D. Final Thoughts

It is critical to make sure we are in God's will. We can set great and wonderful goals, but if God is not in our plans, then we will have totally missed the purpose of life. God will give us wisdom to help us do our planning (Ja.1:5).

This will require us to follow God's wisdom, which is far above the wisdom of men. God's thoughts and ways are higher than ours. For this reason, God's ways may not make any sense to us at the beginning, but they will at the end.

God will grant His wisdom and reveal His will to leaders in a particular project when they ask Him. Some people involve God in their projects only when things are not working out for them. That is wrong. The wise thing to do is to start with God, involving Him from the beginning. So we must spend time in prayer. We need to have the attitude of King Solomon: *"I am but a little child, I do not know how to go out or come in"* (1Kg.3:7). As some earthly fathers lead and help their children, God will do the same for us.

We should measure our goals by God's Word. Before we start on any goals, prayerfully consider their long-range effects in the light of God's Word. That means the leader will ask self whether the goal is worth the time and potential that must be invested in it. If necessary, he will get counsel rather than charge ahead without knowing exactly what to do (Pr.11:14; Ps.37:4-5).

God's plan is good. His plans are to prosper us in our goals, to give us a hope and a future. We have to infuse this reality into our subconscious. We confess it and trust in His goals and dreams for ourselves. He is very much interested in our personal desires, success and productive life (Jos.1:7-8).

Wrong motives will get us in trouble. That which is motivated by God will always bring blessing. That is why the leader who seeks God's direction on a goal has his success guaranteed as he carries out God's directive. The goals committed to God will succeed. They may take time to come to pass, but in His timing they will manifest.

IX. PROPER TIME USAGE

Time is our servant, but we only have so much of it. Life must be measured rather by depth than by length. Time is irreversible and irreplaceable. When we waste our time, we waste our life. (Ec. 3:1-2) Time is one of the most important gifts that God has given

to mankind. It is the carrier of life and, indeed, it is life itself. Wasted time is a wasted life. Time, like a precious treasure, should be guarded, managed and accounted for. Time well accounted for is a life well spent.

Leaders who spend their time each day aimlessly or unconsciously, without direction, goals, or purpose, will find that they have accomplished exactly what they planned—nothing. We must not just take things the way they come to us. We must not allow events to control our lives or plan the way we should use our time. The leader must not let others control their time, planning for them what they should or should not do and what is or is not important for them.

A free person is a person who can control his own destiny in the light of God's Will. This is where proper time usage comes in. For this concept to be effective in a leader's life, they have to realize the scarcity and importance of time. If our time is cheap, then we are living below our God-given potential. If we do so, we merely exist, and probably a great percentage of our time is filled up with boredom. Some people get so much accomplished and leave behind them great accomplishments, while others pass almost unnoticed, leaving few traces behind them after their lifetime. Often the reason for this is in how they spend their time.

Here are some motivating and challenging thoughts that will help us choose how to use our time in order to accomplish what we want to get done:

A. Get Organized

Stop doing useless tasks and find out what we really want. Get a diary or implement a plan to help us do the most important tasks. Personal disorganization is time-consuming and expensive!

B. Use Time Wisely

We should invest time in making ourselves a better person in life. When doing things, ask ourselves, "Why are we doing this? Could we be doing something better with our time?"

C. Say "No" to Time-Wasting Activities

This means the leader will avoid over-commitment, by prioritizing or delegating responsibilities.

D. Stop Procrastination

Procrastination is one of the worst time wasters humanity faces. A leader will get started working towards their goals and dreams. For some, procrastination is an escape from responsibilities and indicates a fear of failure. Idleness has its root in laziness and poor time usage. The cure is self-discipline. There is no other

way out so if that is us, we should sit down, right now, with a pen and paper, and write down all the things we want done. After making a full list, then the leader can narrow down their interests and get started. Do not procrastinate... act now. Why should we wait to do something tomorrow, when we can do it today?

E. Set Deadlines

Leaders get things done by setting a deadline and doing their best to meet it. They do not struggle with or wring their hands about what they have failed to accomplish in the past. What was done in the past is done. Leaders learn to accept and transcend failures.

G. Making Use of Time

Leaders must learn to make the best use of their time. There are many opportunities that we have to use our time in a wiser manner. This includes the fact that when we are traveling or waiting, we can use the time to read, write, and listen to a tape, CD, or iPod, as well as being able to meditate and plan.

To do so means we will have to master our time. After all, it is a gift from God. Why should others control our lives? Do not allow unnecessary intrusions in the middle of an important project. We should be the one to determine the best use of our time. That means that we set priorities by eliminating unimportant tasks. We should identify things, projects, and people who waste our time and deter us from our important tasks and adjust accordingly.

Effectiveness, efficiency and control are the secrets behind proper time usage. Included in this is the fact that we need to learn to live one day at a time. This includes our sleeping time. For many people, seven hours is enough sleep, unless there are health complications (Pr.6: 4-11, Pr. 20:13).

Along this same line, the best use of time is done by those who have organized their lives, who know what they want and use the time available wisely to pursue them. That means that a wise leader will make the most of every good opportunity (Ep.5:15-17; Ps.89:47). For most, life is too short to accomplish all our goals or enjoy all its zest, but if we learn to spend well the moments we have been given by God we will have learned a great secret of life.

Along the same line, the leader should understand God's will for his life and seek to fulfill it. Let God be the center of all our plans. He should be in control of our schedules and our time should be His (Ga.6:9-10).

The purpose of proper time usage is to help us accomplish the most in what time we have, filling our time with the things that count and knowing that whatever we do, we shall get a reward for it. Let us not be weary of doing good. Let us invest our time rather than spending it aimlessly (2Ti.4:2). Life is a journey that must be

traveled by each of us alone. We leave footsteps everywhere we pass: We leave fingerprints on everything we touch. Our life should be a legacy, a gift to those around us and those who will come after us.

X. GET ORGANIZED

If a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God? (1Ti.3:5) (NASB)

Usually, unorganized or disorderly people are not as productive as they ought to be. They often spend more time on a particular task than an organized person doing the same task. This is because they: 1) misplace things; 2) do not put their things in order; 3) are usually messy; 4) do not clear up their work areas; 5) have no particular order of arranging their things; 6) misplace important documents; 7) procrastinate on even important tasks; 8) have excuses for everything they do not do; 9) have uncontrolled habits; 10) do not budget their time, money or resources; 11) do not stick with their promises or tasks; 12) change their minds, plans, or goals each time they meet obstacles or challenges; 13) blame others for their failures.

A. Getting Organized

We must master our habits, discipline ourselves, and stop living in future fantasies. We need to deal with them now. That means that we do things right the first time, or do not do them until we know what we are doing. That means the organized leader will study a project before they embark on it. They do not jump into things blindly. Also, the organized leader will get interested in what they are doing. They are not absent-minded when working, but use their mind and stay alert.

Organized leaders take personal responsibility for what they are doing. They refuse to be sloppy and set daily goals and stick with them as much as possible. They use their time well, refusing to fill it with unnecessary, time-wasting activities.

Organized leaders understand that they must delegate responsibilities. They concentrate on what they are doing and delegate in order to do so. If distracting thoughts or events try to intrude, they take control.

Organized leaders plan ahead. They know how they are going to spend their money and refuse to waste it on unneeded luxuries, leisure time, watching a movie on television when they should be applying themselves to some project, etc. They are always visualizing the end product of what they are doing. They infuse it in their mind and work hard to achieve it.

Organized leaders believe in excellence. They refuse to settle for anything less. If there is something they should be doing, they do not allow an excuse to keep them from completing the task.

Organized leaders have learned it is vital to be on time. They meet deadlines on time or earlier. They have established their authority, standards, and priorities, and then stick with them. They have found, as Solomon said, *"There is a time for everything"* (Ec.3:1-8), which is a good guiding principle.

Organized leaders recognize that the amount of time, money, or resources they have is not nearly as important as how they utilize them to the maximum for the glory of God.

B. Right Priorities

A part of being organized is to have our priorities right. As we do, we will find that things just work better. The evidence of this will show up in several ways:

1) It will be easier to set our priorities and stick with them; 2) We will have extra time for ourselves, our family and our friends; 3) Our projects/tasks will be done right and on time.

If we have right priorities, people will respect us and recognize our standards. They will want to be of help to us. People will not be critical of us when we make mistakes, or when we do not meet a deadline when we function with right priorities. They will offer us opportunities and value our time. We will be trusted.

Perhaps the most organized woman in Scripture is the one in Proverbs 31. This woman was unique, planning the day's work in the morning and delegating it to those who would help it get done. She made sure all the workers knew what they were expected to do throughout the day. She had her own schedule and she knew her goal for the day. Her life was productive, meaningful and well organized. She knew how to use her money. From this we can see that proper organization goes hand in hand with proper time usage.

XI. TALENTS

God has given us all talents. The use of our talent is important to God, for we are to be stewards and use them for Him. We will be judged based on the use (or lack thereof) of what God has given us.

The Word of God tells us both in the Old and New Testaments that work is a very important aspect in life. Jesus taught that it is sin when we do not invest or use the talents God has given us to make this world a better place in which to live. According to the Word, we become a wicked, lazy and worthless servant when we hide our talents.

As a leader, we are to encourage people to take time to discover, develop and apply their talents. Many people have some or several talents buried somewhere which needs to be brought to the surface. It is sad that only a few people ever scratch the surface of their potential abilities. Most go through life without ever knowing who they are, what gifts God has given them, or what their purpose is in God's Kingdom. They fail to realize that God has created each person for a special and specific purpose.

A. Principles of Talent Usage

People need to be motivated and encouraged to find out what they get satisfaction from. Then they should be trained in the skills which promote competence in that area. They must believe in what they are doing. For anyone to succeed in any type of work, enthusiasm and hard work are essential (Ec.9:10).

For a leader to be self-reliant and self-disciplined, they must refuse to drift aimlessly without goals and purpose. They should be motivated to explore new opportunities which will expand their skills, horizons, possibilities and creativity (Ep.4:28). God wants each one of us to accomplish His dreams. These dreams are to be accomplished in our lives so that we can enjoy His riches. We should stop nursing our daydreams and start acting on them to give them life (Pr.14:23).

The fruit of our future happiness lies unborn in the talents we possess today. If we use our talents correctly, then tomorrow we shall succeed, but when we scarcely use them now, we will harvest failure in the future. Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth (Pr.10:4; see also Pr.22:29).

Leaders should never settle for less than they are worth. They should continually strive for quality work, excellence, victory and accomplishment. The people who do not have skills or are slow in learning should commit whatever they have into God's hands. God is able to bless our skills if we are willing to dedicate them to His use and not limit what He can do through us (Ex.31:1-5).

Even if we think we do not have many talents, God can fill us with skill, ability and knowledge in any fields. If we are dedicated to building His Kingdom and to meeting the needs of His people, He will make sure He has all the knowledge available for us that we need. He can make our minds capable and quick in understanding. He can open doors for us to acquire all the skills we want. This is what he did for Bezaleel (Ex.31:2-5). Let us pray to God, and let Him reveal His will for us., and then get into the program of God. See things His way - he could be a chosen Bezaleel (Ps.119:97-100).

This is the secret if we want God's blessings in our undertakings. He will make us wiser than our competitors in business and wiser than the devil in our spiritual efforts. He will give us new strategies, insights and precepts if we seek Him and His ways. Experience shows us that all people who have had true success are

those who have done things God's way. True success does not come any other way. The people of the world may seem successful, but if we dig deeper we will find that it is all vanity and falseness. We can find many people who have been hurt, used, and taken advantage of by these so-called successful people. What use are our skills if they are not used to promote God's Kingdom, help the poor and the helpless, build and bless humanity and, above all, show God's glory?

B. Diligent Use of Our Talents

The writer of Proverbs tells us that *"The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute"* (12:24). He goes on to say that the slothful man will not even cook what he has taken while hunting (v.27). Such a person will find their circumstances turning against them. We will rule our circumstances if we are diligent. To be diligent is to refuse to be slothful. Slothfulness does not come from God (Pr.21:5; 13:4; 1Co.15:58; Ep.6:10). The wise leader will allow Him to strengthen their abilities and skills and will use them actively.

Talents were given to us to accomplish the work or plan God has given. One of the first things that God gave man was work and responsibility (Ge.2:15). We can see from this that God does not want us to be idle (2Th.3:7-10). The purpose of a leader's work should be for the glory of God (1Co.10:31; Co.3:17; 1Th.4:11-12). We cannot afford to be lazy (Pr.10:5; 15:19; 20:4). Laziness brings on deep sleep, and the shiftless man goes hungry (Pr.19:15).

As leaders, we must avoid idle talk and work. All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty (Pr.14:23). We are to be a workman approved of God. We need to be our best for Him (2Ti.2:15). In everything we do, we should do it to the glory of God (Co.3:17; 1Co.10:31). That means that we are to be productive and fruitful workers (1Th.4:11-12), earning our own bread. We need to stop being beggars! Be free! (1Th.3:12) Further, we cannot afford to be daydreamers. We need to put our dreams into action (Pr.12: 11).

XII. GUIDED BY THE VISION

"Where there is no vision, the people perish ..." (Pr.29:18, KJV). Do we notice the tall buildings, machines, streets, schools, hospitals, bridges, airplanes, and ships? What about our homes, the kitchen, sitting room, and bedroom? Everything we see that is man-made was first an idea, a dream, or a vision in someone's mind. All things start as ideas, dreams, or visions. Then, when that idea is implemented, it becomes a reality. All man-made creation starts as a thought in the mind. All great accomplishes have been people motivated by their dreams.

Being guided by a vision is to see that all realistic dreams, aspirations and visions can be achieved if well planned, managed and cultivated by people who are open-minded, filled with faith in God and willing to pay the price. The birth of a vision is the starting point of success. A person without a vision lives an aimless life. Vision overcomes fear

and hopelessness. A vision will stimulate us to action and move us from complacency to higher spiritual levels (Ja.2:14-17).

A. What is a Vision?

A vision is a mental picture of the way things could be or should be in the near future, and is not limited to what is happening currently. A vision is a burning desire that motivates one to venture into new territories without allowing his shortcomings to hinder his progress. A vision transcends the past and the present and focuses on the future. Vision is not bound by the past or present. People who allow past failures or mistakes to interfere with their vision soon fail.

Vision transcends time, stretching reality beyond its current boundaries. It helps to guide people from failure to success. A vision for ministry is only given by God. It conveys God's purpose and points to the direction God wants the ministry to follow.

B. People with a Vision

Vision begins with hope and faith (He.11:1). People who have a vision given by God have this kind of faith. They are sure and certain of what they hope for and do not yet see. Some facts about visionaries include:

1. Visionaries think big and dream big, testing their dreams and ideas with God's Word and with what other achievers have accomplished;
2. Visionaries are not limited to past experiences, because God does not ignore our past experienced; He builds on them, incorporating them into His vision for us. God's vision cannot be hindered by past failures or experiences, for He can miraculously transform them to establish a wonderful future;
3. Visionaries have a sense of direction and purpose. They know where they are going and why; can explain and clarify the vision to their followers, and are committed to it;
4. Visionaries are enthusiastic about God's vision in their life. Aggressive in their moves, they make things happen, rather than waiting. They create strategic and concrete plans to increase and heighten the level of productivity;
5. Visionaries are willing to change. God brings changes along with the vision, requiring often a new way of dealing with situations. One has to learn to accept change in order to do things God's way;

6. Visionaries are careful not to be side-tracked from their main calling. Many doors of opportunities will open, and the visionary needs wisdom to know when to say no;
7. Visionaries are open to new ideas, new approaches and creativity. They do everything within their power to keep the vision alive, exciting, and fresh;
8. Visionaries do not allow the negativity of the world to affect their faith. They are confident and strong believers, and know that even the big problems are no-match for the Almighty God;
9. Visionaries have great expectations. They are unwilling to settle for just getting by. They believe in themselves, endure hard times, and seek encouragement from God's Word and from other Believers.

C. Developing a Vision

In order to develop and implement a God-given vision, we must understand the vision of God's plans for our lives and know the requirements. We must know what it will take to fulfill the vision; we must count the cost, and know what we need to do. Then we can build upon God's promises and not upon our circumstances, not allowing environment to influence or limit the vision. We are to not be blind to our present situation, but allow God to make a way of escape.

God can choose to use us regardless of our situations and worldly qualifications. Consider, for example, Mother Teresa. Earlier in life she was just an average student, but she decided to move beyond complacency to a deeper spiritual dimension. She was willing to put her faith into action.

Martin Luther King, Jr. though a powerful orator, had few natural skills or talents. His family was not special and did not hold any political connections, but he allowed God to use him. God desires leaders whose number one desire is to seek and fulfill His vision for their ministry.

A vision must be God-centered to have a lasting impact. What is based on our abilities alone will be limited and likely fail. We can only dream as big as our imaginations allow, because we base our dreams on the perceptions that we have; these include environment, abilities, resources, information, and legal realities. Our vision cannot go beyond our societal and cultural boundaries nor override our organizational restrictions. The work of the Holy Spirit is supernatural and without limitations. Since human beings are creatures of limitation, only the Holy Spirit can give us a true vision. God's vision will be bigger than we can imagine.

Visionaries invest their lives in their vision. They do not waste their precious time and talents fighting every battle that comes their way. They know that not every battle is worth fighting, so they spend their time working towards the goal. To them, tomorrow is more important than yesterday.

Sometimes it is not easy to grasp God's vision for us. Sometimes the vision may be surrounded with trials, hardships, crises, and misunderstandings. People may misunderstand our motives, and we know that the enemy will try to stop the progress of the vision. Nevertheless, God's vision is empowering. Trials come to purify our motives and help us to refocus our vision on Jesus. In the midst of trials we must always remember that God will only send us into battles that we can win, as long as our motives are right.

God's vision requires hard work, commitment, discipline and change. God's vision will take us beyond our limitations and obstacles. God's vision will cause us to grow in many areas of our lives. It will cause us to be able to do things we have never done before; things we thought were beyond our abilities.

D. Guiding the Vision

We will always face a battle or an aggressive competition from the enemy against our vision. The competition can come in any form and from any direction, even from our close friends. Since we are to protect the vision, we ought to try to identify the following vision inhibitors and protect ourselves. These vision inhibitors include:

1. Avoid being trapped in man's traditions. Traditions often block the progress of a new vision, though we should be careful not to disregard tradition. Traditions can be updated and used as stepping stones to something new;
2. We should not allow the fear of the unknown future to frighten us and keep us from stepping out in faith. As leaders we need to learn how to step out of familiar surroundings and our comfort zone, into the unknown. Taking risk means failure is a possibility. However, with good counsel, the chances of failing can be minimized;
3. We are to avoid the spirit of complacency (Re.3:15-18). Be a person of vigor and passion, not lazy or lukewarm. We should put our whole heart and effort into everything that we do;
4. We are to avoid becoming a workaholic. Learn to take time for rest and spiritual renewal, for we cannot be spiritually effective if we are physically exhausted and mentally stressed out. Even Jesus rested;

5. We are to avoid short-cuts in the things of God. God's vision is usually long-term, so do not settle for short-term rewards and do not sell the future for short-term gratification. Nurture the vision to its fullest potential, and pass it on to the next generation.

E. Making the Vision a Reality

1. We need to release the brakes on our imagination that hinders us from having new ideas. Stop depending on other people's ideas or those who criticize us. The fear of people and what they think of us can keep us from advancing.
2. We need to begin implementing our ideas, desires, and goals. Build on these ideas as new ideas manifest themselves. Aspire to something larger than ourselves. Do not settle for anything less.
3. Have a futuristic outlook and think long-term. Let the past go, especially failures and bad experiences (Ph.3:13-14).
4. We need to test our ideas to see whether they are achievable. Sometimes an idea may be appealing, but the timing may be wrong or we may not be the right person to bring the vision to pass.
5. Aspire to integrity and excellence; be someone we could admire if we were someone else.
6. Seek the will of God and pursue it. Complacency is the enemy of success.
7. Spend time with people who have a positive outlook on life- people with goals, visions, dreams and aspirations. Small-minded people never accomplish much.
8. Become a student of those who have succeeded before us.
9. Learn to identify, train, and support leaders in our local church whose calling or vision is similar to ours.
10. Be responsible and be in charge as God's steward. Avoid people who have no integrity; avoid people who are irresponsible and careless.
11. Enlarge and expand our intellectual sphere, skills and circle of life. Meet new people and venture into new areas of life.

12. Be accountable. We must have mentors--people whose lives edify and affirm us. Have people we can love and with whom we can share our dreams.
13. Dedicate our mind to God. Ask Him for insight. Once we conceive an idea that we believe in, meditate on it, visualize it, infuse it in our minds, verbalize it and set goals toward its birth.
14. Fill our mind with God's Word of faith. Think thoughts of success and not of failure. We need to surround ourselves with successful people, people of faith and sound minds; people who believe in us.
15. Dig deeper, go the second mile, crawl down on our knees to reach under; the last sacrifice will be the gateway to our goals.
16. Learn to think clearly. God will put ideas in our spirit if we learn to listen to His Spirit, which will be the key to our success. What we think and do today will transform our tomorrows. We need to allow the infinite possibilities of God to fill our dreams. With God nothing is too hard, no goal is too great, no dream too high. The only thing required is a positive advancement towards the dream, paying the price it takes.
17. Always be grateful to God and to others. Without the power of God, we are nothing. Without the love of others, our successes and achievements will be useless. Never allow a critical spirit.
18. Be selective when it comes to friends, making sure they are of quality material. "Friends" can build or destroy us.
19. Be willing to change. If needed, we should make appropriate changes in our lives that will be compatible to our purpose. Avoid conformity. Be current. Do not wait to change until it has become too late.
20. Remember, any vision which is from the Holy Spirit must have God at the center. We are only vessels, but all the focus and the glory should be toward God.

F. The Price of a Vision

There are several things we can see that are required to pay the price or cost of a vision (Lk.14:28-32). They include:

1. Discipline;

Self-discipline is a price that a leader must pay in order to bring the vision to pass. Discipline involves training, orderliness, obedience, and cooperation with others; pruning unnecessary traits, self-denial, and cultivating godly virtues, as well as patience and long-suffering.

2. Pressure;

To carry the vision we must be ready to bear pressure, afflictions, and trials. We must endure, not allowing things to side-track us from our main course. We must be tough and we must have faith in the Lord (2Co.1:5, 2Co.6:11).

3. Sacrifice;

We must be willing to sacrifice our comforts or even our own friends, as well as worldly goods or something very important to us, depending on how expensive the vision is. Further, we should remember that comfort tends to confuse, while calamity tends to clarify the situation for us.

G. Supporters of a Vision

Not everyone is called by God to be a leader with a vision, but many are called to share in bringing other people's vision to reality. Those who share in this endeavor are spouses, family members, friends, and supporters who surround the person who has a God-given vision. Are we one of the people in this list? Much of what is written in this chapter is true not only for the leader with whom we are connected, but it is also for us who help bring the vision about, to a great extent.

We, too, must have the faith that sees what is hoped for, and need the confidence that God is infinitely able to overcome any circumstances we may face. We, too, must follow Christ's example of servant hood. We, too, must be called by God, not only to catch a glimpse of the vision itself, but also to the specific ways by which we may personally help the vision to become reality.

So it came about when Moses held his hands up, that Israel prevailed ... But Moses' hands were heavy ... and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other side of Moses. Thus his hands were steady until the sun set (Ex.17:11-12).

The success of the battle depended on Moses' ability to keep his arms raised, holding before the army the vision of a victorious outcome. He could not do this, however, without the assistance of Aaron and Hur, the devoted and committed

men beside him who shared the same vision. In the same way, people of vision need the untiring support of those around them.

Here are some things we can do to be an effective supporter:

1. Be an encourager;

There will inevitably be times when the person with the vision, or other people working with us, will become tired and discouraged. That is the time to remind each other of God's faithfulness from the Scriptures or by recalling a recent incident connected with the vision.

2. Be a willing helper;

This has two important aspects: a) to be willing; b) and to be a helper. Assisting our visionary in some seemingly menial task may not seem all that wonderful to us, but it will free the other person to do something that we may not be able to do. Doing it willingly enables the gift of joy to flow and creates freedom which is essential for making dreams into realities.

3. Keep a willing attitude;

Since the leader with a vision thinks "future" and "big", we may be asked to do things that seem preposterously impossible. At such times, be sure to keep a willing attitude. Those are the times that God has the best opportunity to show what He can accomplish through us.

4. Keep a strong relationship;

Be sure our relationship with the Lord is strong and healthy. Our visionary needs people around him/her who can offer advice and be a help based on Godly principles. Our ability to do this is directly proportional to how well we know God and His ways.

5. Be cooperative;

This involves realizing that we and other supporters have an important part in the vision. God's plans always involve relationships. Even Jesus did not set out alone to accomplish His vision; He had disciples.

6. Be ready to make sacrifices;

The leader with a vision often has to give up a lot to see it come to pass. We will probably be called upon, as a supporter, to do the same. The sacrifice could be financial, but more likely it will be in terms of time.

7. Be dependable;

When we accept a task or responsibility, we need to see it through and do better than our best. We need to allow God to work miracles through us.

H. Motivational Scriptures

As leaders, we are to be diligent, building and nurturing our dreams. When it is difficult, we are to cling to our dreams. We are to be skillful in our business, for then the Lord will increase our stature and we will find favor with God and man. The implementation of one idea is worth more than ten good ideas that are just lying dormant in our mind.

Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men. (Pr.22:29)

Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee. (Ge.13:17).

Can we visualize that? Then we should “possess the land” with God's might. Walk the length of it and the breadth of it -- our dreams, our visions, and our desires.

Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. (Jos.1:3)

Shake off all negative thoughts and ideas. We must loose ourselves from the mental chains that have bound us.

Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. (Is.52:2)

We should also believe in the law of growth, increase, and multiplication.

The LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children. (Ps.115:14)

It is important to confess this truth and to visualize God's blessing and strength increasing in every area of our lives.

Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase. (Job.8:7)

What obstacles, mountains or competitors are against us and the vision that God has given us? When we are faithful and trusting, God will enlarge our borders.

He will bless our work, our business and our vision when we make a habit of appearing before Him.

For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God thrice in the year. (Ex.34:24)

We are to enlarge our vision, our goals, our dreams, and our territories. We are to stretch our curtains, our skills, our knowledge, and our influence. We are not to limit ourselves. We will spread abroad and God shall bless our doings, when we are committed to His will for us.

I. Dream Big

God spoke to Israel through Isaiah about enlarging her tent and stretching forth the curtains of her habitations. She was not to spare, but to make preparations and break forth on all sides, for she was to inherit the Gentiles and inhabit desolate cities (Is.53:2-3). This was a God-given vision. It was designed to keep Israel motivated and willing to press on. We should catch the same type vision (Pr.29:18).

J. Pray for God's Guidance

It is not enough to have a big vision. We must desire to be in God's perfect will. We should let Him guide our desires, our goals, and our motivation. As we pray, we will find the following to be what we hear:

1. Let His eyes guide the way;

We are not to be stubborn and difficult. We are God's children. Allow Him be in partnership with us, doing the leading and we will do the work, with and by His power (Ps.32:8-9).

2. Give our ambitions to Him;

We are to give God our heart and our desires, ambitions and wishes, and He will teach us His perfect will and show us how to bring the vision to birth (Pr.23:26).

3. New way of life;

The Lord wants to bring us into a new way of life that we have never known. He wants to give us a new vision, new desires, new friends and to open new doors for us. He will make darkness change into light and will make crooked things straight; but we need to be willing to see things from His point of view (Is.42:16).

4. Is He our teacher? Are we teachable? (Ps.27:11);
5. Let Him be our Shepherd as long as we live. (Ps.23:1).

K. A Final Word

There is room in this world for people with a vision who are willing to pay the price to make this world a better place in which to live. There is room for people who dream God's dreams and feel God's heart for humanity. There is plenty of room for people who vow to seek God's best in everything they do for others and for themselves. There is room for people who turn daydreams into realities and believe that they are God's workmanship. They are the ones who leave a legacy behind them as a gift to others and as a sign of thanksgiving to their Creator.

XIII. OPTIMISM

We all live in the same world, but within that world, each of us creates our own small world. Our small worlds are made of ideas and beliefs. Those ideas and beliefs present us with the ability to face the big world in which we live. Some have created a world of negativism, self-defeating ideas, and self-imposed limitations. Others live in a world of faith, being optimistic about life, and they believe in the supernatural power of God.

Life is full of challenges, but those challenges can be interpreted differently. Some people look at them as obstacles, while others look at them as opportunities. There is no obstacle that life brings which cannot be overcome. All great achievers have proven this to be true. Beethoven lost his hearing abilities before he composed some of his greatest masterpieces. It was during his total blindness that John Milton wrote Paradise Lost.

There has never been a winner who has not faced tough times and dead ends, times when everything seemed to go dead, with no money, friends, new ideas, inspiration, hope or faith, and no strength to move on. But in the midst of all that, winners hang on optimistically and ride out the rough moments. They are persistent, have convictions, and they have faith, enthusiasm and courage.

Obstacles come to cause us to grow strong, to refine and purify us, and, sad to say, as well as to "weed out" the lazy and the sluggish. Those who have no aspirations are those who have no faith and are not optimistic. Optimistic people have several characteristics that set them apart from others.

A. Characteristics of the Optimistic Person

1. Optimistic people anticipate a good outcome, expecting the best possible outcome in life, in others, in themselves, and in the world around them;
2. Optimistic people have faith. They have faith in God and His creation;
3. Optimistic people express thoughts of victory. They express their thoughts precisely without fear of being misunderstood. They express thoughts of victory, of overcoming obstacles, and carry the seeds of success, victory, strength and love wherever they go;
4. Optimistic people believe in themselves. They believe in being themselves and seek to grow into what they should be. They do not try to be somebody else and do not believe in defeat or failures. They know all can fail, but turn their mistakes into learning aids and stepping stones toward excellence;
5. Optimistic people are risk takers. They are persistent and stick with it until they succeed;
6. Optimistic people make lemonade from lemons. They turn their problems into opportunities, refusing to be stuck with bad circumstances or situations. They believe and see that God can get them out of every situation, no matter how bad it looks;
7. Optimistic people accept only constructive criticism, refusing criticism from skeptics and simply move on with life;
8. Optimistic people believe in others. They believe in human greatness, the power of faith and the power of God that operates in the world.

B. Pessimistic People

1. Pessimistic people are skeptical of things and people they do not understand;
2. Pessimistic people are judgmental toward people, especially passing judgment on those they disagree with;
3. Pessimistic people are critical. They are slow to change and rigid in the way they perceive the world around them;

4. Pessimistic people are strongly resistant to new ideas;
5. Pessimistic people are self-defeating in their behavior;
6. Pessimistic people are always noticing why something will not work or why an idea is not good. They always see the negative side;
7. Pessimistic people believe in human weaknesses, failures, and limitations;
8. Pessimistic people let past mistakes and failures control their future.

C. Optimistic People

1. Optimistic people are willing to give God a chance to work through them, in spite of their shortcomings and past failures;
2. Optimistic people are open-minded, willing to try new ideas, experiences, and even new and different kinds of food;
3. Optimistic people are willing to take new challenges and new opportunities, to cultivate their faith, to expand their borders and horizons, to enlarge their territories, their mind and their experiences.

D. Developing Optimism

We can manage our lives, our family or those under us optimistically, and help each other reach our highest potential. We have to allow God to become our life-time partner in this. We must believe that He wants the best for us, and in His strength and His miracle-working power it will come to pass. We should spend time reading faith-building Scriptures and do the following to develop optimism:

1. Spend time with people who build up our faith, people with a positive outlook on life and who have good attitudes;
2. Stop limiting our God-given potential. We limit God when we do not believe in ourselves;
3. Identify walls that we have built around ourselves. Walls of self-defense, negative attitudes, doubts, and closed mindedness, and get rid of them;
4. Do not allow people to water down our faith by their "It cannot be done" attitudes;

5. Know that in spite of our weaknesses, failures and mediocrity, we also have skills, strengths, and abilities, and above all, a BIG GOD, through whom we can do all things;
6. Become what we imagine ourselves to be. Our imaginative power can change our lives for better or worse (Ro.8:6-7);
7. Take the limits off of God;
8. Understand that if allowed, the carnal mind will kill the vision God has for us (Jos.13:1).

Optimism believes in the principle that there is always room for progress and advancement. It believes that nothing is impossible when we let God help us achieve our goals. Optimism believes in the excellence of every person, when they stand on the Word of God and allow God's creative power to flow through them.

E. See What God's Word Says

Notice how much emphasis is placed on the words that come out of our mouths (Pr.6:2, 18:21). We should let our lips speak words of life; words of optimism.

XIV. EXCELLENCE IN LIFE

Excellence is not just a concept, but a pattern of life which should be expressed by all who claim to belong to the Kingdom of God (Php.3:14; 1Co.14:40; 2Co.4:7). It should not be an end in itself, but be a servant to purpose and vision. It should not only affect a small sphere or segment of one's life, but the whole. For example, someone with high achievements who is a bad moral influence and has a fouled-up private life does not qualify for excellence, because excellence has its roots in character and integrity. Its power lies in flawless morality. The kind of excellence we are talking about goes beyond superficial and temporal secular success concepts. It is not lopsided. It encompasses all spheres of life. It is complete and whole.

True excellence reflects the nature of God. It is not so much what we have achieved, but rather the direction we take towards our goal. It is the walk and the quality of our lives lived for the glory of God; *"...that your daily lives should not embarrass God, but bring joy to him who invited you into His kingdom to share His glory"* (1Th.2:12).

Excellence demands a standard, and that standard must be God's Word. The Bible provides insights or principles by which we can measure our achievements. For example, we can ask ourselves; "Does this thing bring glory to God? Does it hurt or harm others? Does it contribute to the welfare of others? Does it defile the body which

is the temple of the Holy Spirit? How does it affect my values? What are the motives behind this performance? Is this a selfish act?"

Excellence means living a life that is totally dedicated to the will of God. It means living a life that is pleasing to God and is fruitful in every way. It means living a life of character and integrity, doing our work according to God's precepts. It means reflecting God's glory in everything we do. After all, a leader is to influence others. Outsiders read our integrity and character to make eternal decisions, not our doctrines.

Excellence is a quality that God is calling us to reflect in every aspect of our lives. It is to become a way of life because it reflects God's nature and character. Mediocrity and inferiority should not have a place in those who want to serve and please God.

History proves to us that excellence in any sphere of life is possible to be attained when the right price is paid for it. God has given every person natural talents. In addition, He gives spiritual gifts to those who seek His ways. By those gifts we may enhance excellence not only in our productivity and our services, but also in our values and life-style (1Th.2:12).

A. Facts about Excellence

1. Excellence does not come easily. We have to set goals and be willing to meet the conditions required;
2. Skill, competence or ingenuity alone do not produce true excellence. It has to be expressed and reflected by the nature of our life and values- we have to be people of integrity;
3. The people who achieve excellence are those who are dissatisfied by mediocrity, so they determine to make up the difference. They are loyal to their commitments, seek no shortcuts, and take no reward for anything they do not deserve.

What should be the motivating factor towards excellence for Christians? The answer to this question is found in 1 Corinthians 10:31: *"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."*

This is reason enough for us to pursue excellence. Why should we do everything for God's glory? Because all our strength, talents and time belong to Him! If we have to use what is His, we have to do our best for His glory. This is another way to witness to the world around us.

B. Seeing Christ's Excellence

We should let our fellow man see Christ in everything we do.

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do (Ep.2:10).

We are created in Christ to do good works of excellence (Jn.15:8). The kind of fruit that brings glory to the Father is the fruit that reflects His character, and that character is excellence. Throughout the Bible, we see that whenever God gave instructions on anything to be done for Him, such as building the Temple or the Ark of the Covenant, His instructions always pointed towards excellence. Reading in Leviticus, when He spoke to Moses about sacrifice, it was the best that had to be offered to Him. He never settled for mediocrity because that is not His nature. Likewise, we make it our goal to please Him (2Co.5:9). Since excellence takes many forms, we cannot easily set one standard for all forms of excellence, but we can use principles that reflect God's nature to guide us in our judgments.

We can excel. The woman in Proverbs 31 desired excellence as the hallmark of her life. Her standards were set high in everything she did (Pr.31:29-31). She was not an ordinary homemaker. Her secret laid in her faith in the Lord. She drew her strength from Him. The work of her hands was a living proof of what she was. Our fruit stands as a witness of who we are and what our values are.

Lack of charm and outward beauty should not inhibit us. Let the inner beauty reveal itself.

And last of all, the prayer which we make to you from our heart and in the name of the Lord Jesus, is this: that as we made clear to you what sort of behaviour is pleasing to God, as in fact you are doing now, so you will go on in these ways, but more and more (1Th.4:1, BBE).

God is calling us to excellent behavior. His excellence is to shine in all that we do. To excel is to have still more and to go higher. We should accept no limits for good works as long as Christ is at the center of them (Ep.3:20-21). Christ in us is able to do greater things than we can ever imagine! The problem is that we often limit Him through our disbelief. We refuse Him when we doubt His power in us.

We are to release the power that has been deposited within us! We can excel, exceeding abundantly beyond the measures of men. We must never allow the lack of higher education; skills and wisdom of men determine how high we go. Our only judge is God and His power and wisdom are our limits!

Leaders should make a vow to release self from the power of mediocrity that wants to bind us. Like an eagle, we can soar higher. Like a ship, we can sail across the seas. Like a plane, we can fly over the clouds! Go for it!

D. How to Excel

Whatever you do, do it readily, as to the Lord and not to men; Being certain that the Lord will give you the reward of the heritage: for you are the servants of the Lord Christ (Co.3:23-24, BBE).

From this Scripture, we can see several things we need to do to excel:

1. Be committed to become the best we can be;
2. Be committed to personal integrity, dignity, and self-respect;
3. Set goals with high standards which will allow God's power to be manifested in our works. Do not settle for mediocrity, average, or second-rate accomplishments;
4. Keep in mind that our productivity is just the result. Christ is the foundation, and the power behind our lives and our excellence;
5. Make God our partner in our lives (Mt.6:33);
6. Keep the inner power flowing;
7. Discipline our lives;
8. Do the planning and God will do the leading (Pr.16:9).

XV. BODY LIFE

Do not make false statements to one another; because you have put away the old man with all his doings, And have put on the new man, which has become new in knowledge after the image of his maker (Co.3:9-10, BBE).

We continue to sit on the potter's wheel. The Word of God is talking about taking off the old self and putting on the new self which is renewed constantly by God's power. This is what the inner life is to be, continually being renewed, God's way. It is to help us realize that we can totally take charge in every area of our lives, spirit, soul, and body.

Our body is one of the most important possessions we have. Our body is our human identity, yet it bears God's image and likeness (Ge.1:27). We have then, a responsibility to take good care of the precious body that God has given us. It is God's Temple (1Co.3:16-17).

Perhaps we have never taken this Scripture very seriously. If we have not, then we ought to see this Scripture in a new light. God wants us to take good care of His Temple.

A. Clothing

As a Christian, how we look is very important. Christians need to take the time to get to know what types of clothes look best on their unique body! Leaders need clothes that appropriately project the right image and bring the best out of us. Some do not think it is important to look attractive, beautiful or handsome. That is a wrong mentality, since man is so sight oriented. Our God is a God of beauty, and He wants us, both men and women, to portray that quality. As long as we are not extravagant, immodest, or overbearing, it is right to adorn our body in a way that reflects the beauty and excellence of our Heavenly Father.

B. Health

There are two major ways of maintaining a healthy body:

1. Physical exercise;

We have a responsibility to keep our body in good health and in good physical condition. This is where self-control or discipline comes in. Physical exercise will help keep our bodies fit and sound. Our body will have strength to protect itself from unnecessary health problems and this will prolong our lives. Also, with good physical exercise, we will be able to think clearly and enjoy physical activities even in our old age.

2. Eating right;

What we eat is also very important because food affects our whole well-being. It affects our growth as well as our emotional and spiritual lives, our physical activities, and also our manners and behavior. When used right, food brings life, strength and joy into our bodies. It brings blessings to us when shared with those in need, but it can also harm our body and bring about a slow death if misused.

In the Western world, there are many who are digging their own graves with their teeth. They will suffer “death by fork” if they do not change what and how much they eat. They cram their bodies with high-fat foods that are not nutritious. They poison themselves with alcohol, drugs, and tobacco while sitting in front of their television sets, doing nothing. Control and self-discipline is the answer. Knowing what is right is not good enough, but taking action is what matters (Pr.23:2, 25:16).

Refined sugar is not good for our body; therefore, we should not eat more sugar than our body requires. We probably all know this! It is the same with fat. Eating a low-fat, high-fiber diet is best for all of us, or at least in the Western world (Ph.3:19).

There are many Scriptures that give us direction on how to use food wisely. It comes down to only one thing; be in control of what we eat. We do not have to be slaves to our body, being manipulated by our physical cravings. Exercise discipline. Eat right and avoid excessive sugars, salt, and fats.

Daniel and his friends were four Hebrew young men who resolved not to defile their bodies with the royal foods of the Babylonian king. They wanted to glorify God through their bodies. They lived for the glory of God and not for themselves. In return, the Lord blessed their simple diet and brought health to their bodies (Da.1:15, 17).

C. Habits

There are other habits that we may have acquired that are harmful to our body, such as smoking, drinking alcohol, or using stimulating drugs. We know what is harmful to our health and we know the price one usually pays when neglecting and violating God's principles. Exercise willpower and with God's help, determine to live for His glory. Seek out deliverance if necessary. Our body can become a wonderful expression of God's power, love and beauty. Take charge (1Co.9:25-27).

D. Getting It All Together

1. Violating God's principles;

Sometimes we get in trouble with our bodies because we violate God's principles. We can end up with some serious health problems when we abuse our bodies by excessively eating processed foods that are not nutritious.

2. Resolve not to defile our bodies;

To defile our bodies is to take into them that which God did not intend it to have.

3. Natural protection is available;

When we obey God's principles for taking care of our bodies, He in turn will strengthen our body's power to protect itself from foreign invaders, such as bacteria and viruses. It will also function more efficiently, break down less, and last longer. We will have a healthier life. It is possible to have perfect health granted to us by the Lord God Almighty.

4. Stay in tune with God;

We must learn to put our body in tune with God's Spirit. God has made us a speaking spirit and that spirit is what is actually who we are; it keeps us alive. When the spirit leaves, we die physically.

5. Living in harmony with our spirit;

Our bodies have to live in total harmony with our soul and spirit if we would fulfill what God intends us to fulfill. If we try to live a segmented life or neglect one aspect of our three part nature, we will be an incomplete person. For example, if we only develop and use 20% of our soul (mind), we will still have 80% boredom, which would definitely affect our body and spirit. On the other hand, if we give a small portion of our spiritual life to God, the remaining part is going to be out of sync with our total being.

6. Determine our diet;

We are to determine for ourselves what we feed our body, our soul, and our spirit. We should not allow other people to decide what is best for us and we should refuse to be manipulated by advertisements. The media will bring us thoughts from advertisers who may try to take advantage of us, and we could end up shortening our lives either spiritually, mentally, or physically by following their promotion of a product or activity. We should pursue what is good for us, according to the Word of God.

7. God's life-giving Spirit;

The secret of living in harmony with ourselves in spirit, soul, and body is by allowing God's life-giving Spirit to be transfused into us, totally, completely and all-encompassing; into our whole being (Co.1:9-12).

XVI. MARRIAGE

And the man said, This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh: let her name be Woman because she was taken out of Man. For this cause will a man go away from his father and his mother and be joined to his wife; and they will be one flesh (Ge.2:23-24, BBE).

God instituted marriage in the beginning when He made the woman and brought her to Adam for a help-mate.

Let married life be honoured among all of you and not made unclean; for men untrue in married life will be judged by God (He.13:4).

Marriage is to be counted as precious, and especially dear; therefore, both partners are not to defile it; neither by adultery nor by sexual impurity.

Let not that which has been joined together by God be parted by man (Mk.10:9, BBE).

No man is to separate or divide a marriage. It was God's plan all along for the man and woman united in marriage to be life-long partners. Marriage is successful when each partner takes care of their area of responsibility.

A. The Husbands' Responsibility

A newly married man in Israel was released from all duties to his king and from work, for one year, in order that he might “cheer up” his new wife (De.24:5). He was to brighten her day, to make her glad, and cause her to rejoice. He was to get to know his wife and she was to get to know him (Pr.5:18-19).

The husband is to *agape* (Gr.), that is, to love his wife in such a manner as Christ loves the Church (Ep.5:25). This means laying down his life for his wife. It is giving totally of one's self to his wife. This is a love that goes far beyond “I will love you if you love me.” It is a loving of that wife even when she is unlovable (Ep.5:28).

In the same way, you married men should live considerately with your wives, with an intelligent recognition (of the marriage relationship), honoring the woman as (physically) the weaker, but (realizing that you) are joint heirs of the grace (God's unmerited favor) of life, in order that your prayers may not be hindered and cut off. Otherwise you cannot pray effectively (1Pe.3:7, AMP).

The husband is never to think of, nor treat his wife as if she were inferior. He is to respect her, esteem her, highly dignify and protect her. Only by that kind of treatment is the husband assured his prayers will not be hindered in that marriage relationship.

B. The Wife's Responsibilities

Wives, be subject, submissive, and adapt yourselves to your own husbands as (a service) to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife as Christ is the Head of the Church, Himself the Savior of (His) body. As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands (Ep.5:22-24, AMP).

The wife's responsibility is to be submissive to her husband's leadership. Anything with two heads is a freak and will not function properly. Even as the Church is Christ's Body and submits to His authority, so the wife is to submit to

the husband's authority. This does not mean the wife never has anything to say, or no input on what happens. But it does mean that the husband is charged by God with the final responsibility of decisions and that the wife is to abide by and support her husband in those decisions. To submit is to come into agreement with, whether the wife thinks he is wrong or not.

However, that each man of you [without exception] love his wife as [being in a sense] is very own self; [that she notices him, regards him, honors him, prefers him, then a rates and esteems him; and that she defers to him, praises him, and loves and admires him exceedingly] (Ep.5:33, AMP).

As the wife allows her husband to walk in the position of leadership like Sarah did Abraham, so the husband is able to lead as God has ordained. Sarah called Abraham “lord” (1Pe.3:6), which means she recognized his guidance and headship over her. She was saying “you are my master, leader, and authority.” This placed total responsibility for leadership on Abraham, exactly where God ordained it. Thus Sarah was relieved of any fears or anxieties of not knowing what to do in various situations (1Pe.3:1).

The wife, by submitting to her husband, puts Godly principles into action that will win over the husband to Christ. It will not be by her discussion, but by her actions of a right marriage relationship that the husband, if he does not know Him, will turn to God. Actions always speak louder than words! See also First Corinthians 7:10-17; 11:3; Proverbs 31:10-31.

XVII. FAMILY

God's order for the family is the same through Jesus, through the husband, wife, children, work, and other situations. Things outside this order bring problems in a family and other threatening situations.

In the home then, the father is responsible for the final decisions in all areas (1Co.11:3; Ep.5:22-24). It is his responsibility, not because he is bigger or stronger or smarter, but because God put him there. This responsibility is a trust from God. Therefore, the father is to treat his family with respect.

Discipline is required in the home. A father who refuses to discipline his children properly will find society disciplining them after they are grown (Ep.5:28; Co.3:19; Co.3:21). Parents, in training and disciplining a child, must be careful not to train them only with correction, but also to teach and counsel and admonish them with encouragement to go the right direction (Pr.29:15; 13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13).

Correction of children is a proof of our love as parents (Ep.6:4). Children are given to us by God (He.12:5-10), and children are placed in our hands to be trained up to be good citizens and followers of God (Ps.127:3). Even though we are to discipline and correct,

we must recognize that children are in a learning process and they will make mistakes. Continuous punishment for mistakes without consoling, loving and restoration will cause a child to be driven from us instead of to us and the Kingdom of God (De.6:7; Pr.22:6; 1Sa.1:27-28; 2Ti.3:15).

We must accept children for who they are, not who we might want them to be (Lk.15:11-19). When there are multiple children in a family, care must be given to not show partiality. Any partiality shown will drive a wedge between the children and will result in grief for the whole family (Lk.15:20, 22-23). There is no better way to rear children than to always bring them to Jesus. His blessing upon them will also be a blessing to the parents (Ge.25:28; 27:1-13; 27:34-36, 41; 37:3-4, 18, and 28).

There shall be great blessings upon the man who fears God and seeks after Him. The man, his wife, and his children shall be blessed (Mk.10:13-16; Pr.17:6; Pr.31:28).

Happy is the worshipper of the Lord, who is walking in his ways. You will have the fruit of the work of your hands: happy will you be, and all will be well for you. Your wife will be like a fertile vine in the inmost parts of your house: your children will be like olive plants round your table. See! this is the blessing of the worshipper of the Lord. May the Lord send you blessing out of Zion: may you see the good of Jerusalem all the days of your life. May you see your children's children. Peace be on Israel (Ps.128:1-6).

XVIII. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we can say that proper order and management of our life as a leader will cause others to have a good impression of us, as the person God wants us to be. We should make a good impression on the first encounter, the second encounter, the third encounter, and the fourth encounter, and every time after that! We often make that impression by our image.

A. Elements of Image

A good image is formed by combining the following elements:

1. Appearance: physical, grooming and dress;
2. Manner: physical, the way we carry ourselves (successful and confident);
3. Attitude: our outlook, our overall positive outlook (this is the most important impression element);
4. Knowledge: about our vision and the Word of God, our business and competitors business;

5. Manners: are either good or bad. Good manners create positive relationships. Bad manners destroy;
6. Vocabulary: every word we speak affects the image we project, whether proper or improper, good or foul;
7. Sincerity: Be sincere and interested in everything;
8. Impression: the effect of our image will never appeal to everybody, but it will to most, especially those we want to serve.

B. Improve Our Image

We should improve our image and impression on each encounter with others, otherwise we become stale, and more so with each encounter. We should develop a definite improvement plan for ourselves and our work. Improvement is always needed everywhere.

Improving our image can be done by giving of ourselves. No form letter or video, no computer, no brochure, and no referral – nothing can replace being in person. Nothing can accomplish what can be achieved in a one-minute, face to face conversation.

Our image can be destroyed by rumor, so we should never participate in or carry rumors. Be aware that the closer we get to someone, the easier it becomes to do or say something inadvertent to damage the relationship. We need to keep the confidentiality of those we work with confidential.

Being organized means we should manage our lives and our time wisely. As we manage our time appropriately, we will become more successful. Make appointments and keep them. That means also that what we do, we do as unto God. That means it should be done professionally, at all times. We are witnesses unto God. Be a servant!

Last, but certainly not least, we should always tell the truth and nothing but the truth. The leader for Christ will be a professional person, exemplifying His excellence, and leading others toward Him.

Part III Loyalty

I. INTRODUCTION

From the beginning God has honored leadership and He works with and through the leadership He establishes on earth (Ro.13:1-7). Every person on earth has authority that they submit to; even the one who thinks they are the highest in the hierarchy must submit to God.

Loyalty is important in any organization or group. Disloyalty is a contagious disease that blemishes the work of God and will stop a leader from accomplishing what God has called them to. Many churches are lacking in the area of leadership and administration, for too many want to get in the pulpit and receive the honor for being a leader. By this there is confusion in the Church. Companies or non-Christian organizations are more orderly in executing their duties and are thus longer lasting as compared to many local churches today which are characterized by those trying to usurp authority.

II. LEADERSHIP

According to Paul (Ro.12:6-8), we all have gifts over which we are to be faithful, having the force from within and with an excellent spirit to glorify God. Some people have been called as church leaders or to administration and the Bible states that *“Let him govern diligently”*-meaning with earnestness of heart, tirelessly, and being careful as though somebody is watching them. There must be loyalty coming from an administrator and this will definitely follow to their subordinates and to the flock. Anyone called in leadership must know that he is representing God’s Kingdom and so must be faithful and not an infidel.

Paul spoke to Timothy and Titus about the qualities they should look for in leaders. However, these attributes and qualities should be in the person who is called as an administrator/leader, a pastor, usher, praise leader, deacon, bishop, teacher or pastor’s wife, as long as one has the ability to mobilize and influence others and those people must be of no blame (1Ti.3:1-7).

The Scripture here contains a word translated as *“bishop.”* From the Greek, it is ἐπισκοπῆς *episkopēs*, and it occurs four times in the New Testament in its verb form. The noun rendered *“bishop”* occurs five times (Ac.20:28; Php.1:1; 1Ti.3:2; Ti.1:7; 1Pe.2:25). The verb means, properly, “to look upon, behold; to inspect, to look after, see to, take care of”, while the noun denotes the office of “overseeing, inspecting, or looking to.”

There is nothing in the word itself which would limit it to any class or grade of the ministry and it is, in fact, applied to nearly all the officers of the Church in the New Testament, and, indeed, to Christians who did not sustain any office. Thus the word has been applied: 1) to believers in general, directing them to *“...look diligently, lest anyone*

should fail of the grace of God" (He.12:15); 2) to the elders of the church at Ephesus, *"...over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers"* (Ac.20:28); 3) to the elders or presbyters of the church, *"Feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof"* (1Pe.5:2); 4) to the officers of the church in Philippi, mentioned in connection with deacons as the only officers of the church there, *"...to the saints at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons"* (Php.1:1); 5) to Judas, the apostate (Ac.1:20; 6) to the great Head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ, *"...the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls"* (1Pe.2:25).

We bring attention to this word because: 1) it is never used to designate any uniqueness of the apostolic office; 2) it is never employed in the New Testament to designate an order of men superior to the presbyters; 3) it is used in denote ministers of the Gospel who had care or oversight of the churches; 4) it has been used in modern times in a sense which is not authorized in the New Testament, being at variance with the usage there; 5) it is never used in Scripture with reference to prelates. This word should be used in reference to pastors or other officers of the church who desire an honorable office which is right for a man to desire. The Scripture in Timothy gives the qualifications for such office, and it is an office of a leader.

A. Loyalty

Many churches today are lacking in the area of loyalty due to moral deficiency as leaders of the local church. The Church does not prosper because of the grace of the leader but the moral principle of that leader usually affects the success or failure of the local church. If we want to know the hidden behavior of the leader of a certain church, we often can look at the behavioral problems of the church members. The attitude of every person is contagious, no matter how sweet the words are that we might use. An attitude advances ahead of our words and will one day manifest openly. We will find that most of the problems a leader is going through will manifest in the members.

In the case of a leader who is weak in controlling lust, one will likely notice some of the members being involved in sexual misconducts and divorces etc. For a leader who comes late for meetings, we will notice the manifestation in members always giving excuses. Yet Jesus said (Mt.16:18) that He would build His Church upon the rock of Peter's confession and *"...the gates of hell..."* would not prevail against it. To be called a *"rock"* speaks of the leader being firm and strong. Our words must match our actions.

We often see churches that are shaky and weak today, but the Church of our Lord Jesus was and is to be stable. People followed Him, repented, received healing and the Kingdom of God manifested on earth during His earthly ministry. Jesus never compromised; He always represented God the Father and was always loyal to Him (Php.2:1-8).

B. Loyalty in Relation to Leadership and Administration

Loyalty means being faithful to the person(s) we are serving; people serving us too must be faithful and loyal. As a leader we must be loyal, even though some we are leading may be treacherous or betray us. That is why loyalty must begin with the leader so that we are not linked to any immoral conduct of the members. We must fulfill our leadership or administrative duties as though God was standing beside us, watching us; in fact, He is.

C. Importance of Loyalty

Loyalty is a prime qualification for every church member and every church leader. We are not qualified for leadership by our gifts but by how loyal we are to the vision of God. The enemy tries to fight from within, hence the church is destroyed quickly when it has internal conflicts (Pr.22:10). Loyalty will save the church because any antagonism will be a new thing to the loyal people. Loyalty results in the church being filled with love, which operates by the power of unity and team spirit (Jn.13:35). People are attracted by love and repelled by hatred, mistrust, disrespectfulness and argumentative attitudes.

Loyalty helps the church grow quickly and with success where there is a team spirit. Loyalty gives birth to a long-lasting ministry (Ps.33:1-6). God pours out His blessing upon unity and loyalty and every work done in the church and leadership and the congregation reaps the full reward. Every member that sticks to the vision and is loyal to the leadership, even in difficult times, without looking for glorification will receive a reward.

D. Lessons on Loyalty

Loyalty requires full persuasion. A leader or an aspiring leader must be fully convinced in their heart about the things they are involved in. To be a committed member of a ministry team requires what we might call being “...fully persuaded.” If we are going to be loyal to a leader, we will have to be sure about them. Are they someone we can trust? Are they someone who is what they claim to be?

In Luke 23:2, Jesus was accused by many people of “...misleading our people...” (Twentieth Century New Testament) or of “...teaching our people sedition...” Some had accused Him of preventing them from paying taxes to the Emperor and “...claiming to be an anointed king...” (New Testament in Modern English). In Luke's Gospel, Jesus was accused of being able to cast out devils because He was “...in league with Beelzebub, the chief of the evil spirits” (11:15, NTME).

Paul was accused of being the “...source of mischief” (Ac.24:5, NTME). In other versions he was charged with being a: 1) veritable plague (Berkeley); 2) public pest, 3) disturber of the peace; 4) one who stirs up disputes (20th Century NT);

5) ringleader of the sect (KJV). In Acts 24:6, He was also accused of being someone who had attempted to desecrate the Temple and make it unclean. Anyone working alongside Paul would have to be fully persuaded about his character. Was he really the ringleader of a sect and the source of mischief? Did he ever attempt to desecrate the Temple? Those accusations were given to try to stop the spread of the Gospel. So, it is important to know in our heart and to have all the facts about the ministry or person with whom we are working. Those ministries which are attacked are often the very ones who are accomplishing what God intends. We must be fully persuaded so that when the accusations, trials and testing come, we will be able to remain faithful.

There is a saying that there is no smoke without fire. In other words, there is likely some truth in every rumor. We should find out the real truth behind every rumor. Was there any truth to those terrible accusations, coming upon our leader or the ministry? In the normal experience of ministry there will be numerous accusations, rumors and stories about every man of God.

One of the major areas that there will be accusations concerns finances. When a pastor or leader is blessed with a new automobile, if they are following hard after the Lord, we can expect that it would be provided by God in a right manner. The leader should not be a mystery person who is not open with his subordinates. When people start accusing, it is those around us who must be able to answer confidently and correctly.

1. Openness about the vision;

He that is not with me is against me... (Mt.12:30).

We cannot be neutral in a crisis. We must know about the issue and face the issue. Those who are not in agreement with the vision will tend to be against the leader that God has given the vision to. The vision that God gives has eternal consequences. We must know what we stand for and must be prepared to die for it. We must not work with anyone who is "neutral"; that is, when a person does not stand for the vision, it becomes evident that eventually they will be against the vision, for the enemy will irritate them and cause them to see things differently. Either we believe in what is going on or we are against it.

That means that we should be fully persuaded that we are in the place God would have us. We should be fully persuaded about the Pastor in charge. Before we venture into full time ministry, we must be fully persuaded about it. This is essential for the development of true loyalty.

2. Our loyalty must be to the higher authority;

In a large organism like the Church there will always be a number of different authorities we should choose to submit to. Obviously, some of them will have a higher place of authority than others. The lesson here is, if the question of loyalty arises, our loyalty must go to the higher authority.

If for instance, a local branch pastor begins to say things that are contrary to the general vision of the church, our loyalty must go to the highest authority which is the Scriptures. If the Senior Pastor begins to say or do things that are contrary to Christ, we are not supposed to follow them. Even the Apostle Paul said, *"Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ"* (1Co.11:1, NIV).

In other words, Paul was saying that they should follow him only as long as he followed Christ. The day someone stops following Christ is the day we must stop following them. Our loyalty in this case is to the higher authority that is Christ. It is important that we understand this principle. A genuine minister will always tell you, *"Do not follow me if am not following Christ."* Christ did not and would not tell us to drink cyanide. If our Pastor is telling us to drink, it must be wrong. All can make mistakes, but Christ never makes one, so therefore, Paul's admonition to *"...follow me as I follow Christ"* is an accurate one.

At times there may be reports that speak of problems, but such reporting can lead to the edifying of the Church. There is a difference between godly reporting to the appropriate authorities and slanderous gossip. If we do not withhold information, it may save our life someday. For example, Mordecai was sentenced to death through the evil conspiracy for Haman. Just before he was to be executed, it was discovered that Mordecai had earlier exposed two who plotted and almost murdered the King.

"...Bigthan and Teresh... ... sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. And the thing was known to the Mordecai who told it..."
(Es.2:21-22).

When we know of something evil, we are expected to tell it to the proper authority! Mordecai's act of loyalty was recorded in the annals of the nation. The King could not sleep one night and was reading some materials for the archives. He discovered that Mordecai, whose execution he was agreeing to, had in fact saved his life. This revelation proved that Mordecai was actually a very loyal person. When we withhold information, the impression is given that we are in support of what is going on; we are thus becoming complicit. If we uncover an insurrection and arrest all the rebels, that is only the first step. The next thing to do is find out all of those who knew about it. Godly reporting can save the life of a church.

3. Loyalty based on principles;

Many people operate by feelings and emotions, rather than by a set of principles. Decisions based on emotions rather than principles are not substantial. If we have decided to belong to something we must make our decision based on principles and not feelings.

Many people who follow rebels do so without thinking. We must remember that all those who followed Absalom without seriously considering it were killed. All those angels who followed the rebellious Lucifer were cast down. We must remember that when Korah the rebel was perishing, not only he was destroyed, but also his entire family and three hundred others.

All of these people would not have been destroyed if they had thought twice about what they were doing. How can we follow someone like Absalom, who was fighting against his own father? Perhaps Absalom's good looks and long hair swayed the masses. The point we make is that loyalty is based on principles and not feelings and emotions. Loyalty is broken when the Word and its principles are set aside. Our loyalty is, first of all, to God and to His Word.

Jonathan, the son of Saul, was principled. He realized that his father was trying to murder an innocent young man, David. He decided to help David even though we can be sure it was emotionally difficult. Even though his emotions were directed against his own family, it was right thing to do. Some people just follow family lines. Even if it is our brother or sister who is promoting disloyalty, we must do what is right; even when it disguised and appears innocent on the outside. Jonathan was so principled that he said, *"But if it pleased my father to do thee evil, then I will shew if thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace..."* (1Sa.20:13).

4. Counting the cost of loyalty;

Everything has a price. Even our salvation has a price. The Bible says we are bought with a price, so loyalty has a price. To be loyal to someone means we cannot be with everyone, for loyalty may cost us some relationships and friendships. Our loyalty to Christ has meant that we cannot maintain some of old friendships, for they are against Him.

5. Loyalty is expensive;

"...whosoever thereof will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Ja.4:4).

Notice that certain friendships are equivalent to enmity with God. No explanations are needed. Just the existence of the friendship with the world implies being an enemy of God. Anyone who is the friend of our enemy is also our enemy.

We do not need to explain much about whether one is an old colleague, a social friend or a neighbor. The Bible says that the existence of certain friendships is equivalent to enmity with others. We cannot take relationships for granted. They are not meaningless. Every friendship or relationship will contribute something in our lives, either for good or for bad. Every pastor should observe the relationships and friendships that his associates maintain. Their commitment to a cause may even cost them relationship with the Family. Jesus said, *“If any man come to me, and hate not his Father, mother, wife, children, brethren and sister, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple”* (Lk.14:26).

There are certain things that are virtually impossible to see openly. For instance, it is very rare to see two human beings having sex openly. Fornication is one thing we are unlikely to spot with physical eyes. But the Bible says, we should look diligently to see if there is any fornication amongst us. We are supposed to recognize fornication, for there will be tell-tale signs when it is going on. Body language, words and looks will expose fornication to the person who is discerning.

It is the same things with the concept of loyalty. Disloyalty may not be openly visible, but it can be seen if we are looking for the signs. One of those signs is unhealthy friendship and relationships. Our loyalty is revealed by the friendships we keep. Some friendships will be broken if we are being loyal to Christ, to our church and our pastor.

Jonathan's loyalty to David cost him his relationship his own father. *“And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, wherefore shall he be slain? What hath he done? And Saul cast a javelin at him...”* (1Sa.20:32-33). When Jonathan questioned the decision of his father to kill David, King Saul was so angry that he threw a spear at his own son. Notice that Jonathan almost lost his life because of his loyalty to David. Loyalty is expensive.

6. Natural loss;

The Bible teaches us that when Moses became a man, he had to choose between being loyal to God or to Pharaoh. His loyalty to God cost Him everything. Moses would have been the next “Prime Minister” of Egypt. But, his loyalty to his own people cost him his citizenship, his “passport” and his royal status. He lost it all because of Christ. *“By faith Moses, when*

he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choose rather to suffer affliction with people of God..." (He.11:24-25).

If someone is supporting us in a place of authority in the church, giving us money on a regular basis, and they rebel against God and against the church, we will have to choose between singing the praises of an "Absalom" and doing the right thing. If we decide to do what is principled, obviously our supply of cash will dry up. But, that is the cost of loyalty in that case.

E. Loyalty Demands Analysis

Whenever our loyalty is tested, we will have to analyze many things in order to stay loyal. An analysis is detailed study or interpretation of the information set before us. The things we should analyze in order to stabilize our mind and heart in what we are doing include: 1) analyzing the past; 2) analyzing the individual; 3) analyzing the words we hear.

1. Analyze the past;

Paul appealed to Timothy to analyze certain things. First off all, he said to analyze the past. *"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by putting on of my hands" (2Ti.1:6).*

Timothy was a man who was struggling with deviating from his call. Timothy and his church in Ephesus were facing tremendous persecution. Paul wrote to remind him of what happened in the past. Paul was reminding Timothy about his call. He was saying, "I am reminding you of something."

Think about all that has happened in the past. Always remember the challenges and stirrings of the Spirit which we began to feel, likely very early in life. We should keep in mind the zeal and love we had at the first and that will help us to remain loyal to the call of God upon our life. It is likely that those who decide to be disloyal or deviate from the call do not think for a moment about the past.

2. Analyze the individual;

In order to remain loyal over a long period of time, we will need to make a good analysis of the individual concerned. Paul said that Timothy should continue in the things that he had learned. Most importantly, Timothy was to remember the type of person from whom he had learned what he knew (Paul). *"But continue thou in the things which though hast learned and has been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them..." (2Ti.3:14).*

When people begin to come up with all forms of seditious stories and slanderous reports, think carefully about what they are saying. Analyze the individual who is being criticized and whether it makes sense. As we analyze the individual who is being criticized, it will help us to decide whether we should be loyal to them or not. *“But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecution, affliction...”* (2Ti.3:10-11).

Paul was reminding Timothy of his lifestyle and character. He was appealing to Timothy to acknowledge how intimately he had known him. When we meet people we have heard unfavorable rumors about, we often find them to be quite different from how they have been portrayed. For that reason, we should get to know the individual concerned personally, as well as listening to the Spirit of God as to what the truth is. It is only then that we will know the true picture.

“Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses...” (1Ti.5:19). Loyalty requires continuous analysis in the face of constant accusations, rumors and slanderous stories.

3. Analyze what we have heard;

“Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me...” (2Ti.1:13). We are supposed to check on what other pastors preach and what we preach from the pulpit. Is it accurate? Is it the Word of God or man's idea? This will help us know whether to remain loyal to the leader or not. Scripture speaks of those who were nobler and *“...searched the Scriptures daily...”* (Ac.17:11). So we should be too.

We are also supposed to compare what they are preaching now to what they used to teach and preach. This is because some may start out with Bible based preaching and end up with all sorts of weird doctrines. When it is not the Word of God anymore, we are supposed to “defect from the defector.”

F. Maintaining Right Doctrine

Some ministries have drifted off from the mainstream of Bible doctrines into extreme versions of some fundamental truth. There are great truths about the Holy Spirit, prayer, prosperity, etc. But all of these can be perverted and misinterpreted. God did not say we would whistle in tongues or bark and bite people in the Spirit. But these are being taught as biblical truths. Let us stay with the mainstream.

We have to analyze the type of messages that we preach as leaders. People will question whether a minister has been lying to them all along. For instance, does he normally slander other people? Is he a talebearer? If we are suddenly hearing criticisms of someone we love and trust, we should analyze the sort of things they have done all along. It will help us to decide whether we should deal with the person or not. We should remember that “He who lies to us about others will lie to others about us.”

Lying is usually a chronic disease. Some leaders/preachers are clever with words. The Bible says they are the way to the hearts of the simple with good sounding maxims. But clever little phrases are not what the Word of God is made of. Anything that we say must balance up with the written Word. If it does not match with the Word, then it is unacceptable.

We should analyze the form of words we are receiving; are they somebody's opinion or the Word of God? “...*Mark them which cause divisions and offence...and avoid them*” (Ro.16:17).

In the Scriptures we find the historical records of Lucifer, the rebel; Absalom, one who tried to kill his father; Adonijah, the usurper; Ahitophel, the traitor; Shemei, curser of King David; Judas, the betrayer of Jesus. These are just a few more examples of treacherous people. Can we not expect to see people in real church life as these? The Bible is a practical Book and declares, “*The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be....*” (Ec.1:9). We should read the Bible and analyze what it is saying; we should be expecting nothing unusual from what we see in it.

III. DID JESUS MAKE A MISTAKE?

How could Jesus choose a team of leaders with one of them a traitor? When Jesus chose His leaders, one of them turned out to be evil. Do not be surprised if one of our leaders turns out to be a villain also. Some may question Jesus ability to choose elders. Jesus chose those God the Father told Him to choose; yet look at what happened. If we appoint pastors and one of them turns against us, remember that the same thing happened to Christ.

A. Signs of Disloyalty

When anyone we relate with is disloyal, we should not expect that person to announce “I do not support you.” Every good leader must watch out for what we could call “signs of disloyalty.”

We must watch for the signs. The signs will help us through the maze of people who sing our praises, yet find that some are ready to stab us in the back. When those surrounding Christ seemed to praise and acknowledge Him as the Greatest Leader ever, Jesus did not trust Himself to them. “*But Jesus did not*

commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man” (Jn.2:24-25).

Every good leader should be careful to not subject him/her self to all men; neither should they trust what people are saying wholeheartedly. Remember that when Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, He was hailed and praised by the same crowd that cried out, *“Crucify, Crucify.”*

B. Who Can Be Trusted?

In a certain sense, we must learn to take everything with a pinch or two of salt. In another part of the Bible, Jesus’ brothers suggested that He go public with His ministry. *“His brethren said unto him, depart hence, and go into Judea that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest” (Jn.7:3).* They encouraged Him, explaining that no one who wanted to have a far-reaching ministry should keep Himself secret. Remember, these were Jesus’ brothers. Jesus simply answered and said, *“My time is not yet come.”* John 7:5 tells us that the advice coming from His own brothers was not genuine; *“For neither did his brethren believe in Him” (v.5).*

We can see right here that a leader can be subjected to hypocritical advice and lying praises. That is the reason why every good leader must analyze and see the signs of disloyalty. The following are some of the signs that people exhibit when they are disloyal or potentially disloyal.

1. A leader who disappoints us in time of pressure or crisis;

We should notice a leader who absents themselves when the church is going through difficult times. Watch out for people who are absent in hard times, for it is in times of pressure that we see people and their true character. In the heat of events, we may have to rebuke someone sharply, or may have to over-stretch those we work with. Watch how they behave in such times, for it will tell us something about their loyalty.

We expect everyone to cooperate in time of war; that is loyalty. Why did Paul say he would not work with John Mark when he and Barnabas were thinking of going again to the mission field? It was because John Mark had deserted him in a time of crisis.

“But Paul thought not good to take him [John Mark] with them, who departed [deserted] from them...” (Ac.15:38, inserts added).

2. Leaders who disappoint us when they are under pressure;

Some who should be stronger do not attend church meetings or participate when they are experiencing a domestic challenge or a financial

problem. (Pr.25:19) There are people who often present themselves with problems concerning home and families. We should notice that these problems have not prevented them from going about their jobs. Any leader that deserts us when under pressure is a potentially dangerous person.

Many pastors have to preach on Sunday mornings, sometimes after they have had a disagreement with their wives on the way to church. But they still have to minister under the anointing. If they were to break down under the least amount of pressure they would be unreliable ministers.

3. Leaders who have moral weaknesses;

If we have a leader with a persistent problem of immorality, we should take note of such a person and likely have them sit down for a season. They could disappoint us or turn against us one day. This is true because the Bible says a leader must live a holy life, treating the young ladies as sisters and not as girlfriends. Timothy, as a man of God, was told how he should treat women; *"The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity"* (1Ti.5:2).

4. Leaders who have financial weakness;

Again, someone who is a thief is rebellious against Christ. That rebellion will eventually turn against the pastor. If such a thief is confronted with evil deeds, he is likely to be incensed against the leader who confronts it. In his anger at correction, he will likely walk out and spread negative stories about the leader, claiming that they are the real thief!

5. Leaders who are worldly;

A leader who loves watching worldly and perverted films is to be noted, as well as the one who loves worldly music and knows all the lyrics. Someone who admires worldliness is surely attracted to it and is likely not a candidate for leadership. That person is likely to be disloyal when a problem comes up.

6. Leaders who think they can do what we are called to do better than we can;

Anyone who is watching us as the senior pastor, and has thoughts flashing through their mind- "I could do better" or "if I had the chance, I would also be able to minister like that, and probably even better"- such a person is a dangerous person to have around. Remember that Absalom thought he could do his father's job better than he was doing it.

7. A person who comes from another church with no good reason;

Be careful of people who came to us from another church or from where they grew up. Mark them when they say all sorts of the negative things about their former pastors and fathers in the Lord. Remember that Absalom was prepared to attack his own father; "...Behold, my son [Absalom]...seeketh my life..." (2Sa.16:11).

Such a person is deadly to the ministry. We should be sure to not admit that person into our thinking that they will be loyal to us and we should be very careful to not open our life to them. This son, Absalom, chased his own father out of town. Never befriend someone who attacks by words his own pastor.

8. Wounded leaders who have never been healed from their hurts;

Almost every traitor has a history of being hurt at one time or the other. If we would dig into the history of anarchists, we will discover that they have been hurt by someone who was said or done something to them. Remember how Absalom was furious at his brother Amnon for raping his sister Tamar? "...Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar" (2Sa.13:22). Two years after the events, Absalom struck! The deep-seated wound finally produced fruit. Most deep-seated wounds will one day bear the fruits of mutiny.

9. Leaders who are not prepared to be trained or retrained in the ministry;

Notice people who are saying things like, "I was a leader before I joined you;" "I have been a leader for so many years for such and such a church." What that person is saying is "I have already been trained and your training program is unnecessary for me." We should make no mistake here, for those coming from other groups have a reason why they are coming. If they come from other groups, they need to be retrained to suit our vision and needs. We should not allow anyone from another church to introduce another spirit into the house God has called us to lead. We should not allow into leadership any person from another church until a good amount of time has passed, proving or disproving their loyalty.

10. Leaders who are not prepared to do menial jobs;

Anyone who is not prepared to do menial Jobs may be too lofty for real ministry. Jesus' disciples did menial jobs. They were ushers, waiters, errands boys and scavengers. Without shame, they collected baskets of leftover bread and fish in front of thousands of people. They were sent on errands to buy food and to relay simple messages. It is very important to

take serious note of any “high and mighty” individual who thinks certain tasks are below them.

11. A leader with a persistently stormy marriage;

Everybody has difficulties in marriage. All honest people attest to that fact. However, we should notice people who have persistent unhappiness. This is often because of pride and a bad character. Someone who is not able to keep their own home in order is not recommended to be a leader, as Paul instructed both Timothy and Titus.

12. A leader who does not keep promises;

Watch out for brothers who make proposals to young ladies about marriage only to disappoint them a few months later. A person who constantly makes promises and breaks them is unreliable. Do not think that unfaithfulness will remain in the arena of marital relationships. It will definitely spill over into his relationships with his colleague pastors. God tells us that it is important to be loyal, as the Psalmist said, “....*he that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not* (Ps.15:4).

Unfaithfulness is a character flaw and it transcends through every sphere of a person’s life. If they are unfaithful to their beloved (girlfriend), they are likely to be unfaithful to us also. We should respect those who say and then do exactly what they said they would do.

13. A leader who is an unknown factor;

Pastors, we should never be naive. We should not welcome little known individuals into sensitive positions. The best avenue to take, if we need help in leadership, is to allow new people to stay around long enough to prove themselves before we make them leaders. An unknown factor is a dangerous factor. Any new person is a potential traitor until proved otherwise. Remember that when the disciples had to choose someone to replace Judas, they picked someone who had been with them for a long time. “*Wherefore of these men who have companied with us all the time...must one be ordained...*”

14. A leader who has never been criticized;

A person who has never been criticized is often surprised when his superiors are under attack. He thinks there must be some truth in the criticism leveled against them. He usually thinks that if we do everything right, we will never be criticized. This is a great deception.

15. A leader who does not say “amen” or come into agreement when the Word is being preached;

Any loyal leader will appreciate the sermons of his fellow pastors. His support for his pastor is shown when he constantly vocalizes his agreement by saying “Amen”. We should understand that the expression on a person’s face means something and their silence means something also. The Bible says that Absalom said neither good nor bad for two years. How can we make comment or remark for two whole years and then after that “invite us to the party.” That is what Absalom did to his brother Amnon.

16. A leader who does not take notes or is not attentive when we are preaching;

The Bible teaches us to write true and faithful words. Watch out for people who do not take notes or pay no attention while preaching is going on. That may be a sign that they think they know everything, or they may be unteachable. A person who thinks they know all we may be saying should not be around us as a leader for they believe that they would do as good or better job than we would. They will be saying, at some point, “There is nothing new that you are teaching me.” *“...but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence...receiveth us not”* (3Jn.9).

17. A leader who is not faithful in another person’s work;

Watch people’s attitudes toward their responsibilities. If they treat other people’s businesses and property with care, they are likely to take the ministry with care too. We never know how people behave when they are out of our sight, but when we see them and their actions, we should just notice how they handle someone else’s car or property. *“And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s. Who shall give you that which is your own?”* (Lk.16:12)

18. A leader who does not pay tithes and offering;

Anybody who goes to a restaurant with the intention of not paying for his meal is a dangerous character. Anyone who benefits from the church, but secretly does not support it, needs to be watched. He is a disguised robber and traitor. *“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me...In tithes and offering”* (Mal.3:8).

19. Leaders who do not attend certain meetings;

Attending all meetings is important for leaders. Take note of those who constantly absent themselves from certain meetings. They always have

excuses, but take note of them. Remember that Jesus was always moving out on other missions when the disciples were fellowshiping with Christ. Remember how Thomas was absent when Christ appeared after His resurrection.

20. A leader who approves of someone who makes wrong decisions;

“And he [Adonijah] conferred with Joab...And they...helped him”
(1Kg.1:7).

Joab approved of Adonijah’s rebellious ideas. This was because Joab Himself was a rebel. He had exhibited an independent spirit throughout the life and ministry of King David. For this reason, we should notice the things that a leader admires and becomes involved with; observe the things that team members approve of.

21. Leaders who are not prepared to do things they did not choose to do;

Leaders must be prepared to do what they are told to do. If we expect others to obey directives, remember it was first required of us to obey instructions. Some people want to sit where they want to sit and do what they want to do. Notice anyone who becomes reluctant in what they are doing. Is it because they are not doing what they prefer to do?

22. A leader who tries to poison us about others;

The cardinal thing everyone remembers about a snake is that it can poison us. Anyone who poisons our mind about other people is a dangerous person. Never forget that “He that speaks negative about somebody to us will speak negative about us to somebody.”

23. A leader who is not prepared to be birthed into the philosophy, the standards, the vision, the procedures and the spirit of the house;

Every church is essentially different. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. However, the philosophy, the standards, the vision and the procedures of each church are very different. This is what the Bible calls the due order of the ministry and the way things are done there.

24. A leader who manipulates his way into leadership without serving his way into a leadership position;

Every leader is supposed to serve his way into a leadership position. Joshua was a servant of Moses. Elisha was the servant of Elijah. Elisha became the next major prophet by serving Elijah for many years. In fact,

once when the king was looking for a prophet, they immediately thought of finding someone who served Elijah.

24. A leader who does not stay around to mingle and interact with other church members;

If we are a leader of God's people, surely we will want to interact with them and get to know them. If not, we should ask whether they are just occupying a high sounding position or looking to be a true leader. Remember that the hireling does not care about the sheep; but true shepherds care and want to be near them.

25. A leader who has a Jezebel for a wife or husband;

Jezebel was a wife who pushed her husband into doing wrong things. Every experienced pastor must not only look at the leader's character but also at the leader's wife/husband. A partner has great value in their husband/wife. She/he either makes or breaks her/him.

Partners may encourage their husband/wife to have things which do not really belong to them. In Ahab's case, just because he was the king did not mean that he could own all the land in the nation. Jezebel encouraged her husband to take over Naboth's vineyard, even though it did not belong to him.

26. A leader who constantly shifts the blame to other people;

A good leader does not shift the blame. As a leader we must realize that we are ultimate responsible for everything that happens. A good leader says, "It is my fault" when it is. When two good leaders meet, they will "fight" to take responsibility for anything that has happened that is out of order. Remember how Adam shifted the blame to his wife? Remember how Eve shifted the blame to the serpent. It is true that the serpent had no one to shift the blame to, for in the end he was guilty, but both Adam and Eve chose to do what they did.

27. A leader who thinks too much money is being spent on the leader;

Remember how Judas opposed the expensive gift to his pastor, Jesus? Most people who love their pastor feel that nothing is too good for them. Usually, a trait of disloyalty manifests itself when other loyal people begin to show appreciation for the pastor, especially in giving gifts. Often this is out of guilt feelings that the disloyal leader may have, since he does not get involved whenever there is a show of appreciation for the pastor. Remember the words of the traitor Judas; *"Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, given to the people?"* (Jn.12:5)

28. A leader who is unduly quiet, reserved and detached;

Take note of people who have no comments to make and nothing to contribute. The Bible says that Absalom said nothing for two years. After being quiet for two years he decided to have a party. The quietness and moodiness of Absalom had a meaning.

29. A leader who is always late for meetings;

Chronic lateness to important meetings can often mean a wrong attitude. Perhaps they think that they already know what is going to be said at the meeting and that they will only come when it is necessary. Such a person might be working with a scornful and arrogant spirit. Pride always leads to conflicts within an organization. *“Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out...”* (Pr.22:10).

30. A leader who has not been involved in practical ministry work;

There is reason to examine what a person has been involved in before we allow them to get involved with teaching at a Bible school. Too often we see those who function on theory but have no practical application of that theory. The ministry of the Lord Jesus was/is not a set of theories. It is practical, down-to-earth work. A person who has not been involved in the basics of the ministry is a theoretician. All he has to offer is theories about what is right and wrong. Scripture tells us plainly that we should not allow a novice to have a leadership position. Paul said, *“Not a novice...”* (1Ti.3:6).

C. Dealing with Disloyalty

We need to drive away a potential storm from our midst, or at the least be very aware of them. Many people do not realize that a *“little leaven leaveneth the whole lump”* (1Co.5:6). It only takes a small amount of venom to kill a six-foot tall, 200 pound man. In other word, the whole body can be polluted or destroyed by a drop of poison. *“These are spots in your feasts of charity...”* (Jude 12). Do we have “spots” in our feasts of charity? What are those intrusions that disturb the environment of Christian love, peace and harmony? Verse ten of the Book of Jude shows us that there are things that are “spots.”

“But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for the reward, and perish in the gainsaying of core. These are spots in your feasts of charity...carried about of winds...” (Jude 10-12).

If these spots in our feasts of love can be carried by winds, it shows how insubstantial they are. It is time to allow the north wind to blow these away. We could actually call the north wind, the wind of exclusion. For example:

1. A backbiting tongue must be dealt with;

He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool (Pr.10:18).

A backbiting person is someone who “bites our back”; they do not have the boldness to do it in front of us. They have to wait for our back to be turned before they speak. Such people who use slander against leadership are dangerous. They are potentially as dangerous as Absalom was to King David. If discovered, they should be confronted, which will either bring repentance or they will leave.

2. A slanderer is somebody who must be dealt with;

Slander comes from the Hebrew word ‘*lashan*’. It means to “use the tongue to defame, abuse, scandalize, belittle or blacken the character of another.” King David was slandered by many people. Do we need people to blacken our reputation? Certainly not.

“I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel. For I have heard the slander of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life” (Ps.31:12-13).

David was like a broken vessel because of slander. Many ministers are like broken vessels which can no longer function because of the hurt. If a slanderer has such a terrible effect on God’s chosen vessels then it must not be entertained at all.

3. A double-tongued person must be confronted to repent;

The person who lies and deceives should either repent or come under such conviction that they leave the church. *“Likewise must the deacons be brave, not double-tongued...” (1Ti.3:8).*

4. A murmurer must be confronted;

“Do all things without murmurings and disputing...” (Php.2:14).

People who speak to bring an undercurrent and bring a spirit of unwillingness are dangerous people. It is very difficult to lead unwilling or discouraged people.

5. Evil “critics” must be confronted;

Critics are those who would say, “If I were doing it, I would do it this way.” The insinuation is that leadership is not doing what is right.

6. Talebearers must be confronted;

Talebearers are people who invent stories or recreate events to make others look unwholesome. Such people separate friends and pollute the environment with unhealthy poison. They must be confronted with truth and the Spirit of conviction will bring correction or they will leave the church. *“Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceased. As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to kindle strife. The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly”* (Pr.26:20-22).

Notice that Bible says that where there is no talebearer there is no strife. In other words, if we want to get rid of strife, we have to confront the talebearer that they will either repent, or leave.

7. False accusers must be confronted;

The devil's nature is to accuse. Anyone who rises up with the spirit of accusation is actually representing the devil. One of the most appropriate names for the devil is “accuser of the brethren.” In the church, there are always people who allow themselves to be used as agents of accusations. Such people create stories that look very true but are not, and they end up sowing seeds of division and confusion in the church.

8. Liars must be confronted;

At times, some will think it is their duty to spread lies about someone else, even being so bold as to not leave a particular place of worship. That person operates with a spirit of division and disunity, wanting to be with the local congregation and malign the leader constantly. The best way to confront people who are functioning like this is to train the congregation that when someone wants to lie about someone else, they are to bring them before the person they are lying about that it may be dealt with properly and immediately. People do not realize that if we are not happy with what is taking place in the church, we should simply move away without destroying the church of Christ.

9. People who cause divisions must be confronted;

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned: and avoid them” (Ro.16:17). While this would be distasteful, sometimes this must be done from the pulpit during a congregational meeting, if the local church functions under that type of government.

It is sometimes vital to take a good spiritual history. We will then discover what people have done in every church they have been in. We should not be overly excited when we receive a member from another church. We should find out why they moved from that church. Whatever problems that person was associated with in the previous church will surely come up again.

10. People who cause quarrels must be confronted;

We are to mark *“...them which cause divisions and offences...”* (Ro.16:17). There are some people who are always causing offence and quarrels. These are contentious individuals. They delight in magnifying frivolous and vexatious issues until these become a pivot for divisions. It is vital to mark these people and avoid them. This can be done privately the first time, but should be done publically if they do not stop with the private warning.

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