**SALTS COURSE**

**LEADERSHIP GIFTS**

**Leadership in the church**

We need to be convinced the church is the instrument of God’s choosing for building the kingdom of God on earth in obedience to the Lord’s prayer.

Christ will build His church, Matthew 16:18-19, but by faith we build it with Him.

Whilst there is a model to be understood from the New Testament, we can try to read too much into the scant details provided, particularly if we try to build first century culture into the church of today.

We need to communicate the potential influence of the church on the culture and community—which needs to be instilled in the hearts of the people.

The growth of the church has to do with an understanding of its function. The church is the most powerful change agent in society—God purposes it to be the leader and culture changer. People need to taught to believe their church is the greatest place to be. Leaders need to demonstrate a great enthusiasm to be with the people of God.

**Defining Leaders**

In some cases it would seem that leaders are born. That is not always the case as circumstances, upbringing, character, opportunities, training, etc. all go toward the making of a leader.

Leadership is a gift from God which we all have to some measure, but in which some are more strongly gifted. The outworking of the gift of leadership requires experience and can be greatly enhanced through training. Often in practice people become leaders through personal drive and desire for power. Seldom do these people make good leaders. The best leaders are often the reluctant leaders who need to be encouraged by the Lord to grow into more responsibility.

Some have suggested there are basically three classes of people.

**Losers**

• Losers never succeed.

• Losers are defeated before they begin.

• Losers insist that they cannot reach their goal.

• Losers see their dreams as mere fantasies

• Losers see their dreams as intangible.

A loser lives in a world of fantasy, charts his course toward fame and wealth but when reality strikes, he loses all hope. These are the kind of people that allow themselves to stagnate, become complacent, wingers, moaners, complainers.

**Leaners**

Leaners are half-hearted - wishy-washy characters who are alright when all is running smoothly. Leaners are always willing to settle for second best when confronted with a real challenge.

Leaners know how to successfully concede their dreams, plans, goals and aims when confronted with difficulty.

Leaners know how to ‘straddle’ the fence of escape.

There is no room for “losers and leaners” thinking for those who wish to follow the Lord.

**Leaders**

Leaders have learnt to become **winners**, who accept failures and mistakes, and continue striving to reach the goals God has set for their lives.

**Leaders are not afraid to tackle what is seemingly impossible.**

A Leader does not stop until that **CHALLENGE** has been met.

Leaders learn how to have confidence in their God-given abilities and lead.

Leaders recognize their own shortcomings and weakness, but don’t give up. The loser remains in the “starting blocks” dreading the sound of the gun. The leaner wants to win, but is not too sure of himself, and doesn’t really want to make the effort.

The leader is a winner, for he does not give up.

**EXCELLING TO SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP**

There is no contest between natural and spiritual leadership as leadership is a gift of God’s common grace to man. The exercise of leadership between a natural man and a spiritual requires our attention.

**NATURAL**

1. Knows how to be “self-confident.”

2. Knows and studies men and learns the art of getting along with them.

3. Knows how to make decisions swiftly, and then stick by them.

4. Is ambitious, persistent, determined and onward going.

5. Develops his own methods.

6. Enjoys commanding and leading others

7. Motivated by personal considerations.

8. Self-dependent, and inter­dependent.

**SPIRITUAL**

1. Knows how to exercise self­-confidence in God.

2. Knows how to move in God’s ways.

3. Seeks to find and do God’s will in every decision.

4. Humble and self­-effacing.

5. Finds and follows God’s methods, becoming creative.

6. Delights to submit to and obey God.

7. Motivated by divine revelation.

8. God dependent.

Leadership is simply influencing others; the ability to lead others to the desired goal. A leader is recognised by people following him.

The natural leader depends on his abilities, personality, characteristics of his own self to influence others.

Spiritual leaders, influence others by the authority of the HOLY SPIRIT.

**Leadership vs Ministry**

Two fundamental roles in the church are leadership and ministry. An effective church is 80% leadership and 20% ministry. (Mark Kelsey)

**Foundations of Leadership**

The Church is built upon its core values, for example, a generous spirit and liberality from joyous givers.

Leadership builds churches in that it, carries and imparts the vision, and delegates authority to those who will fulfil tasks, and builds the team (unity).

The leadership role demands that the leader grows, his character develops and the team grows around him.

**Confrontation**

A fear of confrontation holds back many leaders. The leader must learn the gentle art of confrontation, which happens at leadership level, one on one. It is never appropriate to confront from the pulpit. Confrontation brings the requirements of the leader to the attention of the people.

Correction is an essential part of life — “if we place ourselves beyond correction, we place ourselves beyond protection”. Proverbs 15:5; 15:10; 13:18.

The leader understands that he cannot lead others where he has not been himself. To do that he must be in control of himself. Proverbs 16:32 and 25:28.

A church grows to the level of the strength in the leadership. The leader is in front showing the way and in this place he encounters many challenges, Psalm 34:19; 1 Peter 4:12; 1 Peter 4:1; James 1:2

**Mature Leadership**

There is an acute lack of authoritative, MATURE leadership as our culture has abandoned its heritage of biblical faith, which will produce statesmanship. An essential quality of leadership is selflessness—the desire to see God’s best worked out for the many.

Mature leaders learn to defer to God in decision making for God’s view is always larger than ours. If we wish to avoid small minded thinking we must renew our minds in the word of God. Not only does the Bible promote right thinking in a legal sense, but right thinking in terms of scale—God’s plan is always larger than ours. God is looking for people who wish to be made BIG for the kingdom of God.

**Requirement**

Leaders **require** things of the people—most important. In delegating authority to people the leader must clearly spell out the requirements of that authority including how they will be ­measured.

**Requirement demands, confronts, sets a standard of excellence.**

There is a difference between requirement and expectation.

**Expectation** is not required, there has been no instruction and requirement, just a stated, or even unspoken, expectation. When expectations are not met leaders become frustrated, angry, but there is no justifiable point of correction.

**Skills and Personality in Leadership**

These are two aspects to leadership.

**Skills** can and should be learned and developed; an example would be confrontation.

**Personality** is far more important, as it is the development of the person, by God working in us.

**Limitation**

Sin has created limitations in our lives that are removed step by step as the Holy Spirit brings renewal in our lives. When a leader “hits a ceiling” he reaches his present limitation and comes to a stop. His work is hindered until he breaks through that ceiling—Isaiah 54. For many leaders that level is their lack of personality development. Personality flaws reveal our ceilings—thus need for enlargement.

We have reached a ceiling in our growth and development when:

we talk about how exhausted we are;

our talk about the church sounds negative;

we notice people’s intrusion into our lives;

we complain about our remuneration;

we can’t wait to get away.

Complaining indicates we have reached a ceiling

Our growing ability to handle stress is a key to development of our personality.

Enthusiasm is one of the most important personality traits to work on and pay attention to being a fun person—have a sense of humour.

**Indispensable Qualities**

Throughout scripture we find that the outstanding men practised the principle of right attitude

**Ambition**

A man can succeed at almost anything for which he has unlimited ENTHUSIASM - Greek *ENTHOUSIASMOS*, from EN-THEOS meaning to be inspired and filled with God.

Worldly ambition is NOT godly enthusiasm.

Godly ambition is essential—and could be known as DRIVE, ENERGY, ENTHUSIASM, or MOTIVATION.

Almost by definition a “leader” is a “self-starter”. People who are unable or unwilling to change their attitude to one of enthusiasm must be content to be followers.

**Persistence**

Napoleon Hill, one of America’s leading analysts says, after having studied more than 500 successful American leaders, and having got to know many personally, “I found the one indispensable ingredient, the common element in all the success stories was persistence. It seemed that the men that really made it were those who kept trying even after repeated failure.”

Never ever give up. We can change direction at the Lord’s direction, but we never give up.

**Courage**

Courage is closely related to persistence. Joshua 1:6 —God told Joshua to have both these qualities. *Be strong (persistent) and very courageous.*

Courage is the willingness to start, persistence is the willingness to continue.

**Making Mistakes**

Gladstone once said, “No man ever became great or good except through many and great mistakes.” He went on to say, “I have learned more from my mistakes than from my successes.’

The greatest mistake is to be afraid—fearful of making a mistake. The man who never made a mistake never made anything.

Theodore Roosevelt made this profound statement. “Far better it is to do mighty things, to win glorious triumphs even though chequered with failure, than to take rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy much, nor suffer much, because they live in the great twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat.”

**Faith**

• FAITH IN GOD—in His Word.

• FAITH IN OTHERS—faith in vision and in goals.

• FAITH IN MY TEAM MATES—faith in God’s ability in me.

• FAITH in God’s call on my life.

• FAITH that I am hearing from God.

**Integrity**

Integrity is an essential quality for successful leadership.

A worldly test of integrity is helpful:

1. Is it the real truth.

2. Is it fair to all concerned.

3. Will it build goodwill and better friendship

4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned.

It is far better to lose an argument and win a friend, than to win an argument and lose a friend.

Integrity is a must in leadership and ministry. Learn to build integrity.

**Mastery over Procrastination**

Apply the principle, ‘DO it NOW’. The Devil’s tool is indecision.

**Develop Good Habits**

1. When addressing a meeting start with “good morning”.

2. Acknowledge people in your midst.

3. Do not eat immediately before preaching.

4. Do not speak with (counsel) people before a meeting.

Discover good habits—and practice them.

**Utilise and Control your Emotions**

Emotion = excitement of the feelings. Stirring of the mental feelings in desire and hope. We are emotive creatures and the leader needs to understand emotions and use them to advantage, whilst avoiding manipulation.

**Handle Criticism**

Criticism arouses one of the most difficult emotions to deal with in a godly manner, but is a key to the growth of the leader

While you are worrying about criticism, you are giving it strength, authority and validity. Criticism will ultimately destroy you. Learn to put it behind you.

Mark Twain, “If there was any real power in criticism then the skunk would have been extinct many years ago!”.

When you enter leadership and ministry - criticism will naturally follow.

Dale Carnegie: “Any fool can criticise, condemn and complain—most fools do. But it takes character and self-control to be understanding and forgiving.”

Spurgeons’ 8 points on criticism:

1. Leaders must be able to bear criticism without feeling the need to attack the critic.

2. Public men must expect public criticism

3. We cannot expect approval from those we condemn by our testimony against their favourite sins.

4. A sensible friend who will unsparingly criticise you from week to week will be a far greater blessing to you than a 1000 indiscriminating admirers.

5. In almost all cases it is the wisest course to let such things die a natural.

6. A blameless life is our best defence.

7. Don’t attempt to fight your own battles rather allow the Lord to fight on your behalf.

8. Defend ourselves by silence and leave our reputation with God.

**Handle Worry**

Definition — Creating mental pictures of things you don’t want.

As the Bible says “Why pray when you can Worry!” or was it the other way around?

Overcoming worry is a matter of personal discipline, requiring regular practice.

**Ministry**

Ministry is the **face that is seen,** the public presentation of the leader to the people. As such ministry needs to be good, polished and professional.

Ministry **builds people**, through preaching, teaching, pastoring.

**First Impression**

It is an important observation that visitors make 100-200 value judgements as they sit in their first service. Whilst most of these are subconscious, they have a profound impact. Thus make a conscious effort to assess meetings and seek to improve them. For example, observe your meetings from an objective point of view, imagine yourself coming in as a new comer and ask yourself the hard questions, such as: would I come to this church?

**Quality Check**

Have debriefing sessions with leaders after services to discuss performances, from leader to P.A. operator.

Develop a culture of excellence amongst leaders, don’t settle for second best.

**Communicating the Message**

Proverbs 25:11

The leader needs to be skilled in personal communication and public speaking, inspiring enthusiasm, sacrifice and loyalty with their words.

When communicating ensure:

1) You have a genuine concern for the people.

2) You are aware of the capacity of this group to understand what you are saying.

3) Your mode of communication sets people at ease.

A leader has a major message which is woven into everything he says. He is a man with a message and is of necessity a prophet.

Develop communication and voice skills—listen to yourself and assess how you could improve.

There are 3 aspects to which we need give consideration:

**How people view you.** What do people see when you stand in front of them? What sort of presence do you have, cultivate a godly presence.

**Connect with the congregation.**  Learn how to connect with a congregation, we need to touch the hearts of the people. Our aim is to influence people; which we do without apology. Certainly it is the power of God we communicate, but we can either assist or frustrate the Lord.

**Content and quality.** Without these the best we can achieve is psychological manipulation.

Ministry must communicate care and love, people need to know we love them, through our actions and comment.

**Personal Development of the Leader**

**Revelation**

What we have is what we have received from the Lord by **revelation**; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14. Leaders lead by what God has shown them through revelation - it is and always has been the foundation upon which the church is built.

The church is built for God through the people of God - not our ideas and programmes.

**Vision**

The leader is a person who believes things can be done - he is bold and confident in God. Vision is faith in action. The leader conceives in his heart what is to happen before it does and he is thus able to give it direction.

Vision is personal; it is a passion; it gives a reason to live and to die - the leader imparts his vision by living it as much as talking it.

**Motivation**

Leaders make things happen; they are enthusiastic.

Distraction, laziness and discouragement are the enemies of motivation. We are motivated by commitment to the call.

Whilst the church is growing we tend not to grow personally, because of the busyness. When the church plateaus we usually find ourselves challenged to growth. This is a normal pattern in churches and it allows the Lord to bring about change in us to prepare us for the next enlargement.

**Wrong mindsets**

These frustrate growth, both personally and in churches. Mindsets build the culture of our church. Mindsets need to change to facilitate growth. Romans 12:2.

**Trial of faith**

God tests us in Worship, Obedience, Surrender and Faith

**Attitude**

“Keep your heart (attitude) with all diligence, for out of it are all the issues of life.” Proverbs 4. Attitudes should be positive, willing and thankful. Leaders must learn to rule their attitudes.

Humour is a great part of attitude; never take yourself too seriously.

**Problem Solving**

Vision always produces problems for leaders to solve.

The problem is never the problem, but our attitude toward it; see 1 Samuel 17, David and Goliath.

Basic steps to problem solving

1) Gather all the information

2) Gather together all the people involved and inform them of the situation.

3) Turn to the word of God to build faith.

4) Keep a cool head - don’t allow emotions or an unruly tongue to control

5) Hear all sides of the problem

6) Keep humble; don’t be governed by anger; don’t be in a hurry.

7) Seek counsel from experts.

8) Make the decision, reveal the plan and goal, appoint people, set the timing, ensure message has been communicated clearly.