A Synthesis of Leadership Principles Emerging from the New Testament

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A SYNTHESIS OF LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES
EMERGING FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

By Stanley E. Patterson, PhD

Introduction

The foundation for a New Testament model of leadership is laid in the Gospels. It is here that we hear the words and behold the behaviors that demonstrate Jesus’ leadership in the context of his human development, his personal calling and vision, his building and equipping of a team, and his initiation of the Christian church. Jesus’ teachings and to a greater degree his modeling of leadership behavior provides the basis upon which a New Testament theology of leadership is built. His words and model serve as the standard for Christian leadership and as such takes precedence over all factors—cultural, organizational, and political—that informs the practice of leadership in the church.

He does not, however, enter the stage of world history as a blank page. His incarnation placed him in the context of an ancient and rich culture that had well-established norms and traditions. He enters his earthly ministry as a Jew with all that the Torah, the Prophets, the Wisdom Literature and their national history brought to bear but also as a part of a society under the domination of Rome that brought its traditions and norms into the context of his life. In addition, the residual influence and divisiveness of Greek culture and language was a part of the mix into which he came and from which we draw our understanding of his teachings and behavior that inform our 21st century practice of Christian leadership.

The books and epistles that follow the Gospels illustrate the manner in which the early church practiced what Jesus had taught and demonstrated regarding leadership.
Each unit of the New Testament contributes something to our understanding of the practice of Christian leadership but it is the Apostle from Tarsus who gives us the greatest insights into the spiritual design that makes Christian leadership unique and undeniably spiritual. We will see through his words the incredible plan devised by the Master to provide the competencies necessary for the church to accomplish the work implied in the Gospel Commission but we will also become aware of his provision that guarantees a sustainable context in which these competencies are practiced in the course of proclamation, discipling, and baptizing as commanded in Matthew 28:18-20.

This synthesis will endeavor to provide a conceptual overview of the New Testament teaching and practice of leadership to the end that we might lay a dependable foundation for service as spiritual leaders.

**Historical Context of Christian Leadership**

Though this synopsis focuses on the New Testament period we must recognize that the context in which Jesus demonstrated his leadership and taught his followers is richly informed by a heritage of leadership models and behaviors that evolved over four millennia among God’s people. The narratives reveal a constant tension between Divine will and human tendency regarding these issues. History from the time of creation to the birth of Christ reveal patterns related to leadership that must be considered in a survey of leadership in the New Testament.

**The Law of the Firstborn: A Distributed Model**

There are two overarching concepts in the Old Testament that provide essential context for the New Testament teaching and practice of leadership. One that has significant impact is the persistent revelation that God will provide leaders for his people
in spite of human weakness, unfaithfulness, and leadership failure. The designation of the firstborn (Gen 48:14f; Exo 13:2; Num 8:16-17) was a systematic plan for providing spiritual and community leadership from the family unit level throughout the community. This distributed model of leadership (Pearce & Conger, 2003, pp.52-54; Yukl, 1998, p.3,53,258,504) was relationally based by its design and reduced the problems associated with consolidation of authority in a single person relationally distant from those being led. God alone was their ruler by his covenant with them (1 Sam 8:7). This distributed system was altered by unfaithfulness and rebellion (Exo 32:29) as illustrated in the appointment of the tribe of Levi to serve the priestly function in place of the firstborn (Num 3:11-13; 8:18-19) and most notably in God’s decision to grant the request of the elders to appoint a king over Israel (1 Sam 8:4-9, 22). Even the central role of Moses in the Exodus is a temporary role that was modified to a distributed model in response to the rebuke and counsel of his father-in-law, Jethro (Exo 18) and by God’s instructions to Moses that his successor, Joshua, should receive only a portion of his authority (Num 27:18-20). This limited grant of authority to Joshua seems to serve as a precursor to the distributed model of organization that marked the confederacy of Israel under the judges.

**Pragmatism in the History of the Priesthood**

The divine model for assigning priestly responsibility was linked to the firstborn after the entrance of sin and death. This created, by its very nature, a distributed model of spiritual authority in that every new family resulted in the appointment of a new leader on the family level. The tribal society under the patriarchal model appears to have recognized the firstborn of the extended family as the tribal leader, i.e. Noah (Gen 8:20), Abraham (Gen 12:7,8), Jacob (Gen 31:54), etc.
When Israel rebelled against Moses and by extension, God, the Levites stepped forward to restore order and a part of God’s response to the unfaithfulness of the people was to transfer the spiritual leadership responsibilities from the firstborn to the Levites (Exo 32:29; Num 3:11-13; 8:18,19). When the Jews revealed their unfaithfulness in rejecting the Christ, the Levites’ assignment as the designated spiritual leaders ended. Jesus became high priest (Heb 7; 8:1) and his faithful followers—each of them—serve that vacated spiritual leadership function (Rev 1:5,6; 1 Pet 2:4,5,9). The history of this spiritual leadership process suggests that God will do what He has to do to provide spiritual leadership for his people.

This epic drama, in the context of the leadership and governance of God’s people, plays out a radical shift during and after the earthly ministry of the Messiah. We find the new covenant church organized under a distributed model where spiritual leadership responsibilities are radically distributed among the people. Each member of the body is now entrusted collectively with spiritual authority (Matt 28:18-20) as opposed to a central human ruler who is appointed by birth or force. This historical context is essential to understanding spiritual leadership and the organizational context in which it is taught and practiced in the New Testament. Every member, whether male or female, is called to serve as a priestly leader in the body of Christ. This broad distribution of leadership responsibility in the New Testament church returns it to its firstborn roots except that the nature of the model is more radical in that every member is included—no exceptions.

Ascendancy and Dominance Influence on Leadership

The co-equal relationship of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden illustrates the leadership context prior to the entrance of sin. This co-equality was altered by the
attendant curse pronounced by God to Adam and Eve that included a subordinate role for the female as she related to her husband (Gen 3:16). This introduces the concept of social hierarchy into the biblical record as a part of the reorganization of creation following the fall. This ranking, however, is couched in the context of a loving relationship that influences the relational dynamics of the hierarchy.

The yearning for dominance and the attitude of self-ascendancy outside of the context of a loving relationship is at the root of the second relevant concept revealed in the Old Testament. The author of sin reveals a driving inner force of dominance and self-ascendancy in his behavior toward both God and mankind. The fall of Lucifer is a result of his efforts to climb the ladder of dominance (Isa 14:12-15) and to fulfill his desire to ascend to a position equal to or above God. The Isaiah 14:15 prophecy reveals the fruit of such behavior to be death and the grave but for the purpose of this synthesis it grants us a contradistinction to the attitude that drives the practice of spiritual leadership in the New Testament. We will see that Jesus spent significant time and teaching effort in dealing with the tendency for his followers to practice the worldly pursuit of dominance and self-ascendancy.

The New Testament Model

Incarnational Leadership

The transformation of Jesus that earned him the title of “...Emmanuel...God with us ” (Matt 1:23) is built upon the act of the Son of God being made flesh and dwelling among us (John 1:14). Taking on human form was not only a means of revealing the love and character of the Father to fallen mankind but also represented a commitment by the
Messiah to identify with us for all eternity. It is this empathic willingness to identify with us that provides a powerful insight into Christ-like leadership.

Jesus spoke quite directly to his disciples regarding his preference for their relationship with him. His choice to become flesh is consistent with his desire to lay aside his titles of position in deference to the relationship of friend (John 15:15). This announcement reveals an aspect of his incarnation that goes beyond the physical and engages the socio-relational. The text itself reveals his choice of titles for the disciples rather than for himself. “Servant” presumes the positional counterpart of “master” while his preferred descriptive is “friend” for which there is no positional counterpart (Keener & InterVarsity Press., 1993, Jn 15:15). This choice is made powerful by the fact that Jesus was holder of the title “Creator of heaven and earth.” His choice challenges every claim to title that any in the church might wish to leverage as a distinctive that would set one above another in a claim for dominance or power (Henry, 1996, Jn 15:15). It challenges the tendency to give greater deference to one who holds high position in the hierarchy of order by which the church is organized.

Incarnational leadership as modeled by the Master requires a willingness to descend in order to serve (Lk 22:25-27) those with whom we identify and of whom we are a permanent part even as he descended for the purpose of serving (Matt 20:28). Seeking dominance over one another is a “gentile” behavior and emphatically inappropriate in the New Testament church. It emphasizes the value of every member of the body apart from the preeminence of their position, the privilege of their birth, or any distinctive by which the world might tend to measure the value of people (Rom 12:3). Such leadership must be devoid of the search for dominance over others or the desire to
ascend the ladder of position at the expense of others. “He that is greatest among you, let him be your servant” (Matt 20:27) lies at the root of Christian leadership.

Leading as a Servant

The washing of the disciples’ feet (Jn 13:5-17) stands as the pre- eminent example of service and egalitarian attitude modeled for the church. But how do we lead as a servant? There are some cultures where the chasm between servant and leader is so great that it is almost impossible to bridge. The mystique and honor granted to leaders simply cannot be formed into a concept of the leader as servant without violating cultural norms. For others it is less difficult to operationalize service as the defining element in leadership. Once again, the Master provides an answer. He had 3 ½ years to transform twelve ordinary men into world class leaders who could competently bear the burden of establishing the Christian church upon this earth. During that period of time there was no sense of him providing service that pampered the twelve. He never did for them what they needed to do for themselves. In fact, Jesus trusted them with most of what we would consider the professional functions of pastoral ministry. There is, for example, no record of him performing a baptism but rather he commissioned the twelve to perform these rites that today we reserve primarily for clergy.

The Service of Transformation

Jesus’ service was directed at the development of twelve men. He served them by serving their developmental needs—spiritual, social, ecclesiastical, and personal.

Leadership service should not be seen in the context of the servant who provides for the luxury of the church. Jesus took the raw human material that he found in Peter, James, John, and the others and transformed their characters and their competencies in a manner
that qualified them for the responsibility of leadership. He directed all of his resources to that end—teaching, encouraging, modeling, rebuking, and whatever was needed to create leaders who would emulate (Smith, 1998, p.9) him in a world that was perched on the edge of monumental change.

If the model of Jesus was about developing leaders to engage in the expansion of the kingdom of God then it stands to reason that the primary function of Christian leaders is the stewardship of developing leaders (Spears, 1995, p.207). Parents who model leadership in a child’s life bear the responsibility of developing their children as faithful followers of the Christ but also as capable leaders who can serve others (Burns, 1978, pp.77-8,98-9). Some pastors are tempted to look upon their congregations as an assemblage of followers that must be managed and directed. The New Testament model would have them viewed as a gathering of potential leaders for whom leaders bear the responsibility of training and equipping for leadership service according to their gifts (Berkley, 2007, p.355).

Task accomplishment grows out of the development of spiritual leaders. Discipleship is the New Testament model of leadership development even though we commonly think of it as being follower development. Jesus took followers and transformed them into leaders! The tendency for leaders to function as managers who coordinate the human resources of members can overshadow the spiritual leader’s call to “make disciples” which are the developmental responsibilities toward others as modeled by Jesus. Secular leadership developmental specialists (McCauley, Center for Creative Leadership., & Van Velsor, 2004, pp.85-115) have learned that this relational development model employed by Jesus leads to greater and more consistent productivity.
Jesus proved that the development of competent and committed leaders would result in the accomplishment of mission more effectively than efforts to direct compliant followers to accomplish the same end. It simply works.

**The Body as a Metaphor for the Church**

**Interdependent Systems**

The New Testament presented a model of church that could not be illustrated by a graph of power or control. The organizational structure of the church was presented in terms of parts and systems of a body where none could rightfully claim pre-eminence over another (1 Cor 12:14-27) but rather, each part honored every other part as being interdependently connected to the system as a means of functioning in a holistic healthy manner. Such “Systems thinking is a discipline for seeing wholes” (Senge, 1994, p.68). This diverse but harmonious model assumes the incompleteness of all of its individual parts who remain dependent upon union with others to produce completeness.

**Diversity of Competence**

This diversity of systems and parts results in an interdependent model that disallows any single member, regardless of position or prominence, to claim completeness or glory apart from the counterparts in the body (Moxley, 1999, p.117). The body is composed of specialized parts and systems made possible by a Spirit-controlled distribution of skills or competencies (1 Cor 12:4-11; Rom 12:4-5) which the Apostle Paul refers to as the “spiritual gifts” (1 Cor 12:1). The Holy Spirit assumes responsibility for building this network of skills that makes the body complete and members are individually accountable for the right use of these gifts of grace (Matt
Giftedness and accountability, apart from a controlled context, create the expectation that the individual thus gifted assumes leadership responsibility in the context of that gift(s). Every member of the body of Christ is thus expected to be a leader! For some that giftedness and leadership responsibility will be high profile and involve major influence on the body while for others it may be relatively obscure but nonetheless necessary to the healthy function of the body. The ubiquitous nature of leadership responsibility is not restricted to the ecclesiastical context alone; it is also recognized in the secular context “…that in the course of their lives, most people must take on leadership roles and participate in leadership processes…” (McCauley, et al., 2004, p.2). This organizational leadership design assumes a dynamic exchange of leader and follower roles as the system recognizes and honors the functions of its diverse parts.

It is essential that spiritual leaders recognize this interdependence and view their own contribution as a reflection of their giftedness. Remaining respectful and grateful for the contribution of all while at the same time holding a prominent leadership position is not always an easy task. Self must always be kept in perspective as it resides in the context of community (Friedman, Treadwell, & Beal, 2007, pp.138-40). The allure of power and the tug of ego are constant influences that would marginalize the spiritual aspects of Christian leadership and urge toward the natural tendency to ascend over others in the community being led.

The Church as Body

When we speak of members as leaders it can cause some confusion due to our general mental model of what constitutes leadership. We should be reminded that “leadership” is a relatively new word and remains embedded primarily in western
thought. Until the 19th century (Bass, 1990, p.11) our only choice of words to describe what we know as leadership was limited to the concepts of king, ruler, commander, head of state or master—all of which assume dominance and hierarchy. These terms clearly delineated leaders and followers, lords and subjects, sovereign and ruled, and controller and controlled. Such organizations and relationships could be charted on hierarchical graphs of power. Everyone knew his/her place in the order of things.

The body (1 Cor 12:12-31) is the definitive New Testament metaphor for our diversely gifted community—the church. We are the body of Christ and this chapter in Paul’s writings is a revelation of God’s plan of organizing the church he has gifted. This metaphor needs little or no interpretation. The diversified and interdependent model is his plan and his choice for us, “But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose.” (12:18).

**Accountability for Spiritual Gifts**

The gifting and the calling of God are one. We are by covenant bound to the Master and are consequently responsible and accountable for the competency(s) granted us by the Spirit. The parable of the talents recorded in Matthew 25:14-30 makes it clear that each of these servants bore personal responsibility for stewardship of the talent(s) entrusted. No one was assigned as a buffer between the Master and the stewards’ responsibility for attending to the entrusted property. We must assume that the exercise of stewardship of the competencies is the personal responsibility of the member who can expect at some point to give an account of how the gift was employed in the body of Christ (Kissinger, 1979, pp.33,40). The assumption we can draw is that God expects the members of the body to lead in the context of their spiritual competencies.
The body was designed to expect that each member would proactively apply their competency as need for it arose even as the human body proactively coordinates its systems and parts for healthy and productive function. Each member is a leader within the context of his/her specialty and functions in an interdependent manner with all other parts of the body. “But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another” (1 Cor 12:24-25).

Interdependent Model of Community

The community-based interdependent model was introduced to us at creation. The first negative expression in the creation story, “It is not good….” (Gen 2:18) was a recognition of Adam’s incompleteness rather than a lack of individual perfection. The solution for the first man’s incompleteness was the creation of a “helper” (2:18, 22) that allowed them together to represent the image of God (1:26-27)—each sharing that which was necessary to make them whole as a team or community. He was not created to live as an individual but was rather created to live as a person in community with others. Eve’s qualities complimented Adam’s and created wholeness. Neither was complete alone. This act of God reveals his organizational plan for his people. We complement one another through our diversity and are thereby made complete.

We must consider this reality as we formulate our understanding of Christian leadership. By the gifting of the Holy Spirit we are all set apart within the community of the church (as contrasted with being set apart from). Positional leaders are gifted first by the Spirit and then chosen by the community to exercise their giftedness as a leader within the community. Some will be gifted and called to a service that is as visible to the
body of Christ as are the eyes on the face of a person we meet. Others will lead in relative obscurity even as there are parts of the body that will never be seen but are equally as important to the health of the body as are the eyes.

This truth has enormous impact upon how we lead. The worldly view of leadership follows a heroic model. Western culture in particular tends to emphasize the individualistic aspects of leaders and often grants them exaggerated importance. Leader’s salaries and benefits in the corporate world testify to this reality. The church is an interdependent world of freely associated members and “…you cannot think and live independently in an interdependent world” (S. R. Covey, 2004, p.57). We must be crystal clear on the fact that leadership in the church is an interdependent community process rather than the product of a solitary person or even a small group of leaders.

The Spirit selects and provides a *variety of gifts* (competencies) (1 Cor 12:4). This allows for a *variety of ministries* which the apostle credits to the Lord (12:5). In addition the plan includes a *variety of activities* which he specifically attributes to God (12:6). This diverse distribution of competencies among members of the church is presented to us as the work of a diversified pattern of involvement of the Godhead. The organization of the New Testament church and the acts of creation (Gen 1:1,2,26; Jn 1:3; Col 1:15,16; Heb 1:2) have in common the diverse distribution of Godhead responsibilities. The Godhead functions in the context of community and demonstrates a diversification of responsibilities but remains One. Likewise the diverse competencies expected of the church are not designed to bring glory to any individual member or part of the body but rather honor the faith community as a whole.
Leadership is a Process

Leadership is not a person. Leadership is not a select group of persons. In spite of the fact that we commonly refer to a leader or a small group of leaders as “leadership”; leadership is a process in which God designed all of us to participate (Barna, 1997, p.65). Leadership is a relational process even as courtship is a relational process. We would never use “courtship” as a name to identify one or both parties involved in the courtship process, neither should we tag a positional leader or leaders as “leadership” without understanding that in so doing we are eliminating the members of the body who are mandated by God to contribute to the process of leadership as surely as are those visible and well-known leaders who coordinate and direct the work of the body. Leadership is a community process.

The Relational Context of Christian Leadership

Covey and Merrill (2006, p.31) divide the essence of trust and by extension, leadership, into two essential elements: “character and competence.” Most leadership scholars (Barna, 1997, pp.134-5; Berkley, 2007, p.45; Blackaby & Blackaby, 2001, p.19; S. R. Covey, 2004, pp.149,235) agree that these two elements constitute the essence of leadership. But what does the New Testament present in this regard? Paul’s description of spiritual gifts (Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12:1-31; Eph 4:1-16) clearly presents them as the source of our ministry competence. By these gifts we contribute to the advance of the mission of the church in response to our commissioning (Matt 28:18-20). A careful look at all three of the spiritual gifts passages above reveals a relational context that cannot be ignored without cost.
In Romans 12:3 the apostle prefaces his presentation with these words among others: “For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.” If the gifting of the Holy Spirit mandates that we contribute to the leadership of the body by means of our spiritual competencies then Paul is addressing leaders with the counsel to be careful not to inwardly assume an attitude of superiority over others within the body. He thus introduces spiritual gifts in the context of personal relationships within the body. After presenting spiritual gifts in verses 4-8 he follows in verses 9-21 with one of the New Testament’s most powerful exhortations to foster healthy relationships within the community of faith.

In 1 Corinthians 12 the discourse on spiritual gifts is followed by a passionate appeal for unity based upon the metaphor of the body wherein he says, “…care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it” (25,26). This relational exhortation is followed by chapter 13, the “love chapter.” This reveals a consistency between the combination of spiritual gift competency discussed in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 in that they both cast the introduction of spiritual gifts in a nest of relational health.

Ephesians 4 follows suit in that the first six verses address the relational context of the church. It includes this counsel: “…with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (2,3).
Dual Service of the Holy Spirit

This would seem to suggest that Covey’s combination of words to define the elements of leadership are mirrored in the New Testament in that it joins the relational health of the members with spiritual competence in the primary passages dealing with spiritual gifts. This should not be a surprise when we consider the two primary functions of the Holy Spirit as revealed in the New Testament—spiritual gifting for competency and engendering the production of spiritual fruit for Christ-like character.

The fruit of the Spirit as detailed in Galatians 5 (see also 1 Pet 1:5) reveals a standard of character possible to those being transformed by the indwelling Spirit. These items constitute the relational standard of spiritual leadership. Though character may be treated as a desired trait but not necessarily required in some secular contexts, the expectation of consistent Christ-like character patterned after the relational standards of Galatians 5 are an essential component of spiritual leadership. Spiritual leadership is not supported on competency alone. The spiritual aspect is forfeit without the elements of fruit of the Spirit.

Spiritual gifts are distributed at the will of the Holy Spirit in quantity and combinations determined solely by the Spirit. As such, the diversity options for the members of the body of Christ are almost infinite. The fruit of the Spirit, however, carries with it a uniform expectation of Christian character. Our temperaments may differ; our mind styles may reveal different ways of thinking and ordering life; our mental orientation of right and left brain will vary, but the standards of character are the same for all. Leaders don’t, by conferral of position, inherit the privilege of demonstrating impatience or loss of self-control simply because they occupy a position of authority.
Positional leaders and ministry leaders within the body are alike subject to the expectations established by the standards of the fruit of the Spirit.

The good news in this combination of competence and character is that both emanate from the Spirit of God. Leaders, both visible and obscure, have the assurance that competence for ministry and leadership contribution is ours as a result of the willingness of the Spirit to dwell within us. A transformed character and a calling with the competencies to support it are ours to claim according the promise of God.

**Discipleship**

Discipleship and the process of developing a disciple are often associated most closely with following. We hear the invitation of Jesus, “Come follow me….” And we rarely take the time to consider that discipleship implies taking someone to a destination (Brown, 1975, p.481). Consider for a moment what lay before the 12 disciples. Three and a half years of intense socially connected spiritual and intellectual conditioning with the Messiah! But was that the terminal point Jesus had in mind when he voiced the invitation? They were still on the journey with him when he informed them that he would be leaving them—but not as orphans (John 13:33-35). At Pentecost their Spiritual companion took up residence within them (John 14:17) but their function changed dramatically in that transition. They went from being disciples to being apostles. The discipleship process developed them as leaders and under the influence of the indwelling Spirit these sent men planted the Christian church and changed the world—forever.

Discipleship has as its goal the making of a leader. It is a leadership development process. His intent for us on this earth is that we become effective ministers regardless of our specific calling, whether lay or clergy, whether gifted as a pastor or gifted as a healer,
we are called to become leaders in the context of our giftedness. Our call to make disciples is to identify giftedness and develop spiritual leaders for the kingdom.

Calling

Jesus demonstrated a method in the process of transforming common men from being fishermen, tax collectors, farmers, etc. to becoming effective spiritual leaders. It started with a selection process and an invitation to enter into a journey of personal transformation. “I will make you fishers of men” revealed a purpose in the mind and heart of Jesus that communicated value to these men and superseded the value of their current occupations. Jesus’ call was an invitation to personal transformation and they followed him. The discipling relationship was personal, intense, and accompanied by risk. But they followed and their lives were changed.

Invitation Leads to Following

The first step in discipleship today is the same as it was on the day that Jesus called Peter, James and John from their boats and nets—selection and invitation. The invitation was personal and involved the promise of relationship. Discipling is personal and it must be intentionally relational in nature. Our modern obsession with efficiency tends to relegate relational elements of leadership development to the dark corners of ministry while we apply economy of scale principles and assess on the basis of efficiency rather than effectiveness. We need to consciously seek out and identify giftedness in people and invest personal effort and time to aid the Spirit in transforming them into effective spiritual leaders.
Following Leads to Mentoring

The invitation leads to following. It is in following that the relationship is developed which allows the sort of learning that Frank Smith refers to as *classical learning* (Smith, 1998). This is learning that takes place in a natural relational context where the learning is most often immediately connected to events and activities of life. It is the common form of learning enjoyed by children where observation prompts questions that are answered in the context of doing. It is a form of learning that is effortless and effective. Most of the questions associated with this learning find their origin in the learner rather than the teacher—a condition that increases the effectiveness of teaching and learning. This learning requires close personal contact and honest relational commitment but is attended by a forgetting curve that is almost negligible.

Empowering Leads to Sending

The disciples enjoyed such an environment with Jesus. They learned as they lived together. They were transformed in the context of observing their Leader even as a child’s formative introduction to leadership behavior occurs in the relational environment of the home (Bass, 1990, pp.807-11). This prepared them even as good parenting behavior prepares a child for the empowerment that attends responsibility and authority for effective contribution to the needs of the family. The leader who trains must also assign responsibility and empower to affect growth. Empowerment is not only for task accomplishment but also has a generative and maturing effect on the learner. Once done, sending is the next step.
Sending Leads to Leader Multiplication

The sending of the seventy (Lk 10:1-24) reveals the connection between empowerment and sending. The assignment was clear and the parameters of empowerment were clear—proclaim the presence of the Messiah and heal the sick (10:9). Only in executing these two assignments did they discover that their empowerment also authorized authority over demons, which says something about the abundant nature of the Master’s empowerment.

The plan of sending the seventy has an essential link to leadership development. Pairing them in teams of two creates a relational learning context that moves the learners from a mentoring relationship with Jesus into the more mature mentoring context of co-learning (Anderson & Reese, 1999, p.15). The disciples had the advantage of a social group plus an active contextual environment necessary for optimal learning (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000, pp.119,279). In a sense the “two by two” model provided a weaning strategy in the leadership development process that resulted in less dependence upon the physical presence of Jesus and paved the way for the internalized influence of the Holy Spirit. Thus disciples were multiplied to form an army of spiritual leaders.

Conclusion

The New Testament presents a leadership model enriched by a cultural history of internal tension relating to Divine expectation and human failure but also impacted by external tensions of war, occupation, and captivity. God’s service as ruler of his people under a covenant relationship that involved no human buffer between him and them provided a distributed leadership model down to the family level. The centralized leadership model to which God reluctantly submitted in the placement of a king as ruler
of Israel (1 Sam 7-9) and the consolidation of priestly responsibility in a tribe instead of the familial model of the firstborn ended that direct role and relationship. This was radically reversed in the New Testament record when Immanuel was realized and the Spirit of God took up residence in the hearts of his people. The need for the intermediate ruler was no longer present.

Christian churches emerged with no formal ecclesiastical structure to govern them other than that of the Holy Spirit, the ministry of the Apostles and the Scriptures. Yet leaders emerged from the body in what seems to be an egalitarian process of selection and commissioning by the church but wherein the apostles and their disciples involved themselves intimately in the spiritual formation and leadership development.

The natural human tendency toward dominance behavior was modified by efforts to instill in the body of believers an attitude of equal value for members regardless of a person’s position or giftedness. Leadership role was determined by spiritual giftedness and a demonstration of Christ-like relational behavior. These two Spirit-given qualifications—character and competence—establishes the spiritual foundation for leadership in the New Testament. Each member serves as a steward of his or her spiritual gift and contributes specific service to the process of leadership that addresses the mission to which the church has been called by the Master.
REFERENCES


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