

Subject: Leadership  
Text: Ephesians 4:11-16  
Method: Textual

Title: **Developing Leadership Potential**

General Purpose: Instruct concerning the need for developing leadership in all congregations of the Lord's church.

Specific Purpose: Consider the texts relating to development, preservation and perpetuation of faithful leadership in all congregations of the Lord's church.

Thesis Sentence: Since each congregation of the church of Christ is intended to mature, having its own leaders, leadership potential must be exploited, or the church will forever remain immature and severely reduced in effectiveness.

Introduction:

- A. Every mature church must also be mature in its leadership, inclusive of elders, deacons, evangelists and teachers (Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5; Eph. 4:11-12)
  - B. Where do these leaders come from? How are they developed?
- I. The church must develop, replenish and preserve her own pool of leadership potential (Potential: "Capable of coming into being or action; the capacity for use or development.")
- A. Leaders come from among the local membership (Acts 6:3-4 "...seek out from among you...")
    1. Some men may meet some qualifications for leadership at the time they are converted, but must be matured as faithful Christians
      - a. "Able to teach (1 Tim. 3:3)" presumes a thorough grounding in the faith and a readiness to teach it
      - b. "Not a novice (1 Tim. 3:6)" means not a new convert, one who is inexperienced and immature
    2. Some men may be automatically excluded, having no potential for leadership, because they fail to meet certain qualifications and cannot meet them in the future
      - a. "Husband of one wife (1 Tim. 3:2)" eliminates those who have had multiple marriages (other than widowers (Rom. 7:2) who have remarried, of those who have remarried after a scriptural divorce (Mat. 19:9)) who can never meet this qualification
      - b. (1 Tim. 3:4) one whose children have grown up in wickedness and rebellion can never meet this qualification.
      - c. (1 Tim. 3:7) those who have destroyed their reputations by wickedness can never meet this qualification, for although they may have repented, leadership necessitates a respect and confidence from the people that those who are not of "good report" can never achieve
    3. Other men may be only temporarily disqualified by qualifications not currently met, but possible to attain to in the future
  - B. Vigilance to seek out and train is essential
    1. The church must be ever vigilant to seek out and encourage good men to aspire to leadership and service (Acts 6:3-4)
    2. The church must never be without a major portion of her training program being directed toward leadership development (2 Tim. 2:2)
    3. Male children being raised by Christian parents must be nurtured and trained to aspire to leadership and service (Eph. 6:4)
    4. All male new converts should be evaluated for leadership potential
      - a. Is there anything that would permanently disqualify them?
      - b. What present qualifications can be reinforced, strengthened and preserved?
      - c. Which qualifications are they temporarily not aligned with, but which they may be instructed and encouraged to develop in the future?

II. Replenishing and preserving leadership potential

- A. Replenishing leadership -- faithful leadership must always seek to renew and replicate itself
  - 1. (1 Tim. 3:2 - able to teach) good leaders are good disciplers
  - 2. (2 Tim. 2:2) good leaders are to insure that there is never a "leadership vacuum" - a training and evaluation program is essential!
  - 3. (Phil. 2:19-22) like Paul, every leader should look for and develop a "Timothy"
  - 4. One of the greatest failures of many congregational leaders is the complete neglect and failure to train up leaders to succeed them
- B. Preserving leadership potential
  - 1. Regular, repetitive, recurring training is essential
    - a. Teach -- 1 Tim. 4:11
    - b. Remind -- Tit. 3:1
    - c. Repeat -- Gal. 1:9
  - 2. Opportunities to gain "hands on" experience must be provided
    - a. "hearers" must learn to be "doers" (Jas. 1:21-27)
    - b. Knowledge is matured in "doing" (Mat. 7:24-27; Jn. 8:31-32)
  - 3. Corrective, protective discipline must be consistently practiced to keep leadership potential from being corrupted
    - a. Purge out old leaven (1 Cor. 5:4-8)
    - b. Refute contradictions (Tit. 1:9; 2 Tim. 2:24-25)
    - c. Mark and avoid false teachers (Rom. 16:17-20)
    - d. Reprove, rebuke and exhort (2 Tim. 4:1-5)
  - 4. If these important things are neglected there will be no leadership potential available
    - a. That which meets corruption, if not protected (Rev 3:2), will become corrupted also (1Cor. 15:33; 1 Cor. 5:6; Mat. 23:15)
    - b. Every effort must be made to preserve the purity of the doctrine (Tit. 1:9) to, in turn, preserve the purity of the church (Eph. 5:25-27)
- III. The results of conscientiously developing, employing, preserving and replenishing faithful leadership (Eph. 4:12-16)
  - A. The saints are equipped for the work of the ministry
  - B. The body (church) is united in faith
  - C. There will be common and individual growth in the knowledge of Christ
  - D. A mature church - matching the stature of Christ
  - E. A congregation not plagued by indecision
  - F. Stable in doctrine and grounded in truth
  - G. Able to withstand trickery, craftiness and deception
  - H. Each joint (church member) trained and motivated to effective work, rather than being neglected, complaining busybodies
  - I. A congregation that is edified (built up) in love

Conclusion:

- A. Every congregation is intended to mature, and every mature congregation must have proper leadership
- B. Every congregation must continuously strive to develop, preserve and replenish a pool of leadership potential
- C. Positive results are healthy, stable, growing, serving, mature Christians and congregations
- D. Negative results from neglect of this great challenge and responsibility are unfaithfulness, corrupted and troubled churches, spiritually dead congregations, always longing for faithful leadership, but forever lacking it

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